

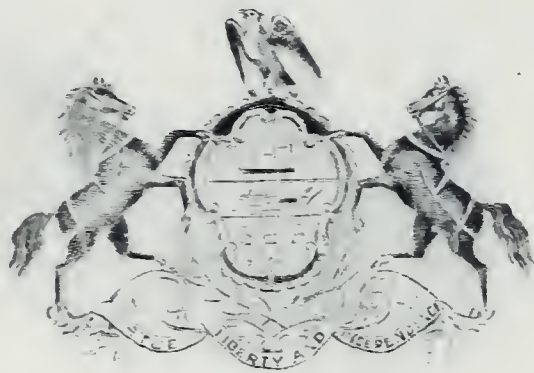
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The Negro in South Carolina During the Reconstruction

By

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

*The Association for the Study of
Negro Life and History*

The Negro in South
Carolina

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FOREWORD

For a number of years fair-minded students have had doubt about much set forth in the histories of the reconstruction of the Southern states. Such persons realize that the hostile elements concerned do not generally tell the truth about each other, or at least leave untold important facts which should be known. Hoping to engage the services of scholars to write a definitive history of the Negro during this period and that of the free Negro prior to the Civil War, the undersigned induced the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial to appropriate a sum adequate to the beginning of the much needed investigation in these neglected fields. Thanks to this gift the research work of the Association has taken definite form under regularly employed investigators. To write the history of the rôle played by the Negro in the rehabilitation of the Southern Commonwealths, Mr. A. A. Taylor was employed in the capacity of Associate Investigator. He has been exploiting this field for about two years and now offers the public the first publication of his researches.

Born in the District of Columbia and trained in its public school system, Mr. Taylor further equipped himself for this work by completing the undergraduate course at the University of Michigan and a graduate course at Harvard leading to the degree of Master of Arts. He had some experience in social service in connection with the Urban League and the Young Men's Christian Association, and he served for a number of years as a teacher at Tuskegee and the West Virginia Collegiate Institute. He has, therefore, been broad enough to approach his task with restraint and care, and has presented a disinterested account of the Negro in the drama of reconstruction.

C. G. WOODSON.

WASHINGTON, D. C., October 15, 1924.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is the result of the effort of the Research Department of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History to record the salient facts of the American Negro during the reconstruction period. The importance of such a study lies in the fact that the freedmen turned loose upon the world to play a new role in this country passed through a readjustment effected by various forces from without and from within. Inasmuch as what the Negroes are now doing and may do in the near future will be largely determined by the forces then at work among them, a definitive history of this group in its new status constitutes an important chapter in the annals of our time.

In view of the fact that there have been published treatises on the rehabilitation of all of the Southern states, the untrained mind might inquire as to the necessity for additional effort in this field. In fact, as many as two or three extensively circulated monographs on the reorganization of several Southern States have appeared, and among uninformed persons have passed as standard works in this field.

The popularity which these works have had has been due to several reasons. They are so far the only such treatises available. Some of them were written by noted students of history who availed themselves of the first opportunities offered by the graduate schools of Northern universities, especially Johns Hopkins and Columbia. Since then these persons have played the enviable role of shaping the thought of the world with respect to the Negro.

One unacquainted with the field is given the impression that these works were written according to the requirement of modern historiography, but a thorough examination easily convinces the investigator to the contrary. They were written to prove that the Negro is not capable of par-

ticipation in government and to justify the methods of intimidation instituted to overthrow the reconstruction governments of the Southern commonwealths. Many of these writers were directly or indirectly connected with the side of the controversy for which they were trying to make a case before the world. Self interest, then, impelled them to select such facts as would establish their point of view and to ignore facts to the contrary. These treatises, therefore, except so far as they contain unconscious evidence, are practically worthless in studying and teaching the history of the reconstruction period.

Furthermore, these treatises would leave the impression that history is largely a record of political strife. Many persons who have used these reconstruction histories have the idea that right after the Civil War the majority of Negroes deserted the farms, wandered from place to place as vagabonds, and, upon the carrying out of the Congressional plan of reconstruction, most of them resorted to politics for the solution of their problem. If these unsupported statements of such historians be accepted, the student of economic history would wonder how the people of the South found food to eat, clothes to wear, and provided themselves with shelter.

In addition to political institutions, moreover, history includes the study of things social, industrial, economic, aesthetic, and religious. During this very period these Negroes and their friends were working for their uplift by laying a foundation for the acquisition of knowledge, the accumulation of wealth, the establishment of homes, and the extension of Christian religion. Until all of these affairs have been adequately treated in the study of the South during the reconstruction period the public can never have the proper view as to what was going on there at that time.

Examining these works, moreover, the student discovers that they were written from newspaper material, speeches, and records made by the very men who constituted the party of opposition and resorted to all sorts

of methods to overthrow the governments against which they were arrayed. Such works, then, can have no more value than those of other writers who might collect testimony solely from the Negroes and Northern whites constituting the personnel of the reconstructed governments. The record of the Negro, then, so far as these treatises are concerned, has never been presented, even if it be granted that everything said in them is true. Only the negative side of the case has been discussed and in most cases that was restricted to the political. A man's case is never presented to court until both sides of the question have been heard. It is generally conceded in most countries of today, moreover, that one should not be condemned on the testimony of his enemies, and certainly the decision in his case should be withheld until he has had the opportunity to testify in his own behalf. The historian must seek a larger measure of the truth by balancing the one side of the controversy with the other and by hearing the testimony of those who as indifferent observers left a record as to what was going on in the South.

Among the "indifferent" observers, who were not so indifferent, after all, we often hear of the newspaper correspondents and travelers. A considerable number of them visited the South to study the situation after the Civil War, and some of them left a record. Unfortunately, however, so many of them did not go far into the South, doubtless because of the lack of traveling facilities and its desolate condition. The Spanish and French travelers tended to visit those parts of the country inhabited by descendants of their nations; and most of the Germans, Dutch, and Scandinavians directed their steps through the Northern part of the United States. Yet, more than a score of prominent ones visited South Carolina and published their impressions.

While these works contain useful information, the investigator is likely to be misled by some of their statements as to conditions in the South. In the first place, some of these reporters had never been in a slaveholding

community before, and few of them had ever seen large groups of Negroes. Being white persons whom custom required to stop with the former masters of the slaves, moreover, so many of them were influenced by the opinion of the whites that the Negro belonged to a broken down race, which in freedom would soon be exterminated by vice and idleness. Here and there unconsciously, however, these very persons mentioned facts which actually disprove the radical theories on which the elimination of the Negro from politics was deemed justifiable.

CHAPTER I

THE NEGRO POPULATION

The Negro population of South Carolina exhibited in 1880 a considerable increase over that of two decades earlier. In 1860 there were 412,320 Negroes in the State. In 1870, the number was 415,814. Ten years later the Negroes numbered 604,332. By 1890 this class of the population had increased to 688,934.¹ As compared with the white population, the growth of the black is even more striking. The enumeration of whites in 1860 was 291,300 and in 1870, 289,667, thus registering a loss of 0.56 per cent. In 1880 there was reported an increase to 391,105.

Coexistent with this increase in the Negro population was a considerable interstate movement of the blacks. 408,407 of the Negro population of South Carolina in 1870 were born in the State. On the other hand, there were altogether 505,899 Negroes born in South Carolina, living in the United States. The loss to the State of 97,492 Negroes by movement of population, however, does not indicate an interstate movement of this number during the decade from 1860 to 1870. Obviously some of these persons had been sold in slavery to the planters of Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi; for in these States many former South Carolinians were found. The total gain of the State through the migration of Negroes was 17,531. Of this class of population in 1880 there resided in the State 588,819 native born, whereas 682,817 lived in the United States. The loss by movement of population had been reduced to 93,498 and the gain had decreased to 15,653.²

The distribution of the Negroes with reference to urban and rural locations was extremely disproportionate

¹ *U. S. Census Reports*, Volumes on Population, 1870, XI, XII; 1880, XXXVI-XXXVII; 1890, I, 396-397.

² *South Carolina, Resources and Population, Institutions and Industries*, published by the State Board of Agriculture of South Carolina, 1883, p. 389.

throughout the reconstruction period. By far the greater number lived in rural communities. In 1870, there lived in a number of urban communities of less than 4,000 inhabitants fewer than 50,000 Negroes. Ten years later not more than 60,000 lived in the same centers. In 1870, however, there lived in Charleston 26,173 Negroes; in Columbia 5,295 and in Greenville 1,375. In 1880 such population of these same municipalities numbered respectively 27,267, 5,698 and 2,791. The excess of rural population over urban was 332,971 in 1870; it was approximately 508,567 in 1880.³

During the twenty years between 1860 and 1880, the ratio of distribution of population in counties exhibited steadiness. Among the several counties whose comparative standing varied were Lexington and Orangeburg, in which the Negro population decreased between 1860 and 1870 but so increased between 1870 and 1880 that the number in the latter year exceeded that of 1860. The population of Pickens and Colleton counties decreased between 1860 and 1870, but increased between 1870 and 1880 to the end that though greater in the latter year than in 1870 it was still smaller than that of 1860. Beaufort County reported a progressive decline in its Negro population during these years, while Charleston exhibited an unprecedented growth.⁴

Of counties in which the Negroes were enumerated greater than 10,000 there were 19 in 1860; 20 in 1870; and 27 in 1880. Of those reporting 20,000 there were 5 in 1860, the same in 1870, and 9 in 1880. Two counties had in

DISTRIBUTION BY SELECTED COUNTIES

	1860	1870	1880	1890
Beaufort.....	33,339	29,050	27,732	31,421
Charleston.....	40,912	60,603	71,868	35,073
Colleton.....	32,661	16,492	24,181	26,245
Lexington.....	6,246	4,536	7,467	8,411
Orangeburgh.....	16,788	11,156	28,453	33,738
Pickens.....	4,304	2,538	3,716	4,136

³ *Census Reports*, Volume on Population, 1880, 424.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1890, I, 427.

1880 a greater number than 30,000 Negroes while one contained as many in 1870 and 1880, respectively. The high water mark of 71,869 Negroes in one county was reached by Charleston in 1880.

The distribution of the Negro population by sections in 1870 and 1880 displays greater contrasts. The Negroes were located mainly in the more easterly sections of the several districts of the State, especially in the more productive agricultural regions. The following table exhibits an excess of whites over blacks in two sections in 1870. Ten years later this excess appeared in only one.

DISTRIBUTION BY AGRICULTURAL REGIONS ⁵

	1870		1880		Percent Negro
	Whites	Negroes	Whites	Negroes	
Coast.....	2,135	19,052	10,828	56,308	83
Lower Pine Belt.....	58,342	124,511	61,206	142,542	69
Piedmont.....	138,392	135,478	173,819	221,224	56
Red Hill.....	29,665	46,758	19,742	25,124	59
Sand Hill.....	.....	.....	11,730	16,882	59
Upper Pine Belt.....	44,238	85,230	88,564	132,845	60
Alpine.....	16,020	4,785	25,182	9,314	26

The living conditions of these people will be interesting to consider. As slaves most of the Negroes lived in cabins clustered together near the residences of their owners. Although after liberation a number of them quickly acquired small parcels of land, the majority of the freedmen finally returned to these cabins as laborers on the plantations. This, however, was not always the rule in the very rural sections where many of such habitations continued as deserted hovels in the midst of waste lands, whereas some of them were torn down. Most well-to-do white families had in their yards or in the rear of their homes an inferior house for the use of their Negro servants. In some cases their maids and butlers slept in some such secluded apartments of the home of the white employer as the attic or the cellar, where there was practically

⁵ *South Carolina*, Part I, Tables II and III.

no furniture except that of a bed consisting of a pallet spread on the floor. Negroes purchasing property in towns generally contrived to buy lots in one vicinity so that in each of such urban centers there developed a distinctly Negro quarter in contradistinction to that populated principally by whites. The Negro quarter consisted mainly of wretched one room log cabins with wooden shutters and mud chimneys. As there was little interest at this time in sanitation and the funds for such a purpose were limited, the authorities easily found excuse for neglecting the districts in which the Negroes were segregated. The whites at this time, moreover, had not learned that the germs of disease developed by the lack of sanitary conditions among Negroes, do not draw the race line themselves.⁶

The food which the Negroes in their poverty-stricken stage could obtain was of the coarsest sort except in cases where they lived among the whites and received their board in addition to their specified compensation. Their food rarely included anything more than hominy, corn bread, rank fat bacon, coffee and cheap molasses for breakfast. At dinner they had corn bread, rice, and if thrifty,—pork and vegetables. At supper they had similar articles without meat. In addition to this the average Negro family could usually purchase sufficient flour for a plate of biscuit or hoe cake for luxury on Sunday. While some had sugar for the sweetening of coffee and other such purposes, many were by circumstances restricted to the use of molasses. Having to work most of their time on the plantations of the whites, the freedmen could not easily diversify their diet by use of such vegetables as potatoes, peas, beans and the like; for they did not always have the time to cultivate a garden.⁷

The dress of the Negroes was almost anything circumstances made it. The Negro children in isolated places hardly ever wore more than a shirt, and it was not unusual

⁶ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 676 et seq.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 678.

to see them playing about naked. Half the clothing of the indigent was begged from the whites, who gave them cast-off garments nearly worn out. It was impossible to discern the original piece of a coat or pair of pants or its intended color, owing to the number of party-colored patches. Negroes sometimes made suits out of gunny-bags. Their shoes were brogans or worn-out boots begged from the whites. The women wore turbans or went bare-headed. The Negro men, as a general thing, did not wear hats before emancipation; but thereafter they displayed quite a zeal to procure head wear, though not a few went uncovered.⁸

“ Yet, so contradictory is human nature,” said a South Carolinian “ notwithstanding what has been said, the Negro is essentially a dandy, loving fine dress and decorations above all things. The females, particularly, are excessively fond of colors, and delight to parade on Sundays in the cast-away habiliments of their mistresses. The legislators and others in their higher society are first-class swells. Among women of pure African extraction a white man can never discover one really beautiful, although the males are sometimes undoubtedly handsome.⁹ The Negroes of the wealthier set naturally imitate all the social customs of the whites, paying homage to the ladies, preventing the females from working, sending the children to school, living in fine houses, employing servants, supporting a good table, and keeping carriages and horses. The lower classes of Negroes also copy, as far as they can, the habits of the whites.”¹⁰

The Negroes had some social privileges. They were freely admitted to the theatres in Columbia, and to other exhibitions and the like; but ample room was given them by the white audience if the halls were not crowded. In Charleston and the country towns they did not secure entrance to some of such places, but to “ shows under can-

⁸ *Ibid.*, 680.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 680.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 676.

vas," such as circuses, magic-lantern exhibitions, and the like, they were invariably allowed admission. In the larger towns they had their own boarding-houses, and especially at the capital, where there were many officials and legislators.¹¹

Whites, however, insisted on social ostracism. They would ride on the same seats in cars with blacks if the latter were traveling in the capacity of servants, nurses and the like; but did not enjoy such contact if the Negroes were posing as equals. After the reconstruction changes, however, the Negroes were permitted to ride in first-class railway and street cars. This liberty at first encountered much opposition from the railroad conductors and white passengers, and led to frequent conflicts. But it became so common as hardly to provoke remark, although if a Negro entered a car in which all the other travelers were white, the latter, if they did nothing else, plainly evinced aversion, and, if practicable, left a wide space around the Negro.

Some exceptions to this rule were noticed. There was very little distinction made among the children of the races growing up together and the attachment thus formed sometimes continued through girlhood and boyhood only to be terminated when as adults the one would go socially in one direction and the other in another.¹² Among the Catholics, moreover, George Rose did not find such segregation even among adults. Speaking in 1868, he said: "Many of the Negroes are Catholics; and though in some of their churches they have galleries to themselves, yet there is not that broad line of demarcation drawn between them and the white races in the House of their Father that is so general in the North; nor is the feeling against them at all inveterate."¹³ Yet, Edward King did not believe in 1871 that there were in the State a half dozen married couples with the wife white and the husband black

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 676.

¹² Iza D. Hardy, *Between Oceans or Sketches of the American Travel*, 297.

¹³ George Rose, *The Great Country of North America*, p. 172.

or colored. But there were three or four instances in every county of colored women married to white men. So strong was the sentiment among the whites against such unions that few were, "like Geoffrey Hunter, bold enough to wed with a Toinette." It condemned them to bitter hatred and irrevocable social ostracism among their own race. They generally had no recourse but to associate with the colored people and become Negroes in all but color.¹⁴

Excepting base-ball clubs an observer did not find many social associations among South Carolina Negroes, a thing which contrasted singularly with the zeal which they had evinced in connecting themselves with political and religious organizations. They had, perhaps, in the State in 1877 about half a dozen local temperance societies. But the whites rigorously kept them out of national orders like the Sons of Temperance, the Good Templars, the Knights of Pythias, the Odd Fellows, the Masons, and the Grangers. The Negroes did not immediately manifest the tendency to found such fraternities among themselves. The exception to this was a branch of the Masonic brotherhood which had a few subordinate lodges of Massachusetts. These Negro Masons, however, were not recognized by the white lodges or the grand body of the State.¹⁵

The Negroes had among themselves "Social rank and aristocracy outrageously severe and strictly discriminated," as was the case even before the war. This situation dated from the Denmark Vesey plot in 1822, when the whites devised the scheme of weakening the Negroes by arraying the mulatto class against the blacks in making

¹⁴ "A widow in Marlborough, in destitute circumstances, desiring to send her son to Harvard, wrote to the president," says an observer, "and through his kindness obtained favorable terms for tuition, etc. She was very grateful and in high spirits. At the last moment, however, a misgiving struck her. She dispatched another epistle, telling the president that she was so much obliged to him, and so forth, but that she had heard that Negroes were in Harvard as students; and concluded by inquiring if it were true. The president sent a cold but courteous reply in the affirmative. The young man never entered Harvard."—(*Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 676).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 682.

the former their confidants and threatening them with punishment if they associated with the blacks.^{15a} These distinctions, however, were local, so that no generalization could be made of the various classes. The gradations were founded principally on official station, position in the church, possession of money or real estate, former ownership, and city birth. Those who had been trained up "genteelly" in white families of the highest respectability, as waiting men, maids, drivers, and so on, of course, prided themselves not a little on their polished deportment; and those who were "able to work on their own account (for instance, to rent land and to farm, to keep a smithy or to be carpenters) held themselves considerably above such as had to hire out as laborers."¹⁶ In Columbia, moreover, the Republican officials, white and black, sported magnificent twenty-five hundred-dollar turn-outs, with livery and blooded stock.

In the untoward condition of the lack of food, poor shelter, and inadequate clothing immediately after emancipation, however, many Negroes died of privation or easily yielded to the diseases which rage among the poverty-stricken class. In some cases as many as 25 per cent of a community died during the readjustment. Mothers having to work out for a living, moreover, so neglected their infants that many of them died. Henry Latham believed "that the trouble was due to the lack of benefit clubs, which would be a substitute for the former owners' care of the sick and aged."¹⁷ In 1877 a South Carolinian, asserting that the rate of mortality among the Negroes both in cities and in the country greatly exceeded that of the whites, felt, however, that their constitutions must be wonderfully hardy to stand the strain they bore so well.

Destitution and diseases of malignant types wrought great suffering among them at Charleston. The Freed-

^{15a} *Daily Courier*, May 13, 1865.

¹⁶ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 677-679; Sir George Campbell, *White and Black*, 33.

¹⁷ Latham, *Black and White*, p. 128.

men's Bureau came nobly to the assistance of the Negroes, supplying them with clothing, rations and the medical attention that they sorely needed.¹⁸ The Charleston Hospital, which, beginning in 1865, maintained an extensive dispensary service for the sick poor, moreover, gave substantial relief to the freedmen. During the years 1871-1880 inclusive, 114,592 diseased persons were treated in the hospital and by the dispensary physicians at public expense. The whites submitting to this treatment numbered 27,826; the Negroes 86,766.¹⁹

Neither the efficient operation of the Bureau's medical department nor the charitable service of the Charleston Hospital, however, was able to reach the whole mass of suffering freedmen. The latter died in large numbers from starvation, the progressive development of malignant disease, inertia, and ignorance. As the Negroes became more and more dependent upon themselves, the lack of medical facilities, their carelessness in administering remedies or in following the advice of physicians, the congestion in unsanitary quarters and the lack of wholesome food—all of these factors produced among the freedmen an appalling number of deaths.

A comparison of the mortality rates among the Negroes for selected years in selected areas shows most effectively their plight. In a total population of 703,708 in 1860 there were 9,749 deaths in South Carolina. In 1870, with a population of 705,606 there were recorded 7,380 deaths. A tremendous increase in deaths is noted for 1880 when in a population of 995,577 the mortalities amounted to 15,728. In 1890, however, a decline is shown in that but 15,495 persons in a population of 1,151,149 died. In 1870, 4,935 Negroes in a population of 415,814 died. The distribution between sexes was practically equal, there being 2,484 deaths of males and 2,461 of females. In the same year, 2,346 whites in a considerably smaller population suc-

¹⁸ *Report Ass't Commissioner, Freedmen's Bureau (S. C.), House Ex. Doc., 2d Sess. 39th Cong., III, 737.*

¹⁹ *The Charleston Yearbook, 1883, 137.*

cumbed. In 1880, however, 5,035 Negro males and 5,494 females died, the total of 10,524 exceeding the mortalities of the whites by 5,330. The ratio of deaths to population was, therefore, a trifle higher among the Negroes, that of white males being 13.37 a thousand, of females 13.19. The ratio of the Negroes among the males was 16.90, among the females 17.93 a thousand. In this respect, however, there was some improvement in 1890. With the death of 10,448 Negroes in a population of 688,934, the mortality rate of males was 15.01 and females 15.31. This was yet in excess of the rate for the whites who in a population somewhat smaller suffered 5,047 deaths, such that the rate of males was 11.49 while that of the females was 10.36.²⁰

There existed between the mortality rates of the whites and blacks in Charleston a greater unfavorable difference against the latter than in the State at large. In 1850, the rate a thousand Negroes was 20.98; in 1870, 41.01, a lamentable increase; and in 1880, 41.08. During the same years the mortality rates among the whites were respectively 18.68, 23.69 and 22.01. The mortality rate among the Charleston whites in 1880 was lower than the rate for the entire population in each of the cities of Savannah, Nashville, Norfolk and New Orleans. The rate among the Negroes was exceeded only by that of Savannah and New Orleans.²¹ The higher death rate of the freedmen in South Carolina, considered in the light of that recorded during the slave regime, may indicate that the freedmen had not yet developed a self discipline comparable to the restraint formerly imposed upon them.

“To those accustomed to think of slavery only as prolific of every form of evil,” said Somers, “this increased mortality of the Negroes under emancipation may appear surprising. But when one considers the strict, almost domestic control under which the slaves were kept in Charleston, how they were cared for when young and

²⁰ *U. S. Census Reports Mortality Statistics*; (1860) 213; (1870) 420, 421; (1880) Vol. XI; (1890) Part 3, 7.

²¹ *Charleston Year Book* (1883), 136, 137.

provided for when old, and how their number in the city was kept down to the actual demand for their services, one finds natural reasons enough for an increased liability to death in the severe ordeal they have passed through since their emancipation. They flocked in from the country at the close of the war, deserting the Sea Islands in large bodies, and produced all the evils of overcrowding at a time when the white population, who could alone employ and maintain them, were not only thinned in numbers, but reduced to poverty, and the trade and wealth of the town were destroyed. Such a state of things could only have a disastrous effect on health and life."

"Yet with all this excess of Negro mortality in Charleston," continued Somers, "the whole deaths in 1869 were not more than 1 in 32.77, which it would be quite possible to match, and even exceed, in the mortality returns of the United Kingdom. But if the Negro population and mortality of Charleston be excluded, and the white population only considered, there is a degree of healthfulness which is almost unequalled in large towns of the old country. The mortality of whites in 1869 in Charleston was only 1 in 44.93. The mortality of whites of all England in the same year I find to have been 1 in 44.77, and of all Scotland 1 in 42.52." ²²

Statistics will give some idea of the new status of the Negro defectives, dependents and delinquents. In 1880, the total number of persons in South Carolina thus classified was 5,971. The number of Negroes so reported was 3,017. This number is not disproportionately great as respects population, for the Negroes were enumerated as 604,332; the whites as 391,105. The defectives constituted the largest group, there being 461 insane persons, 782 idiots, 666 who were blind, and 263 deaf-mutes. The dependents formed the smallest group, there being but 33 homeless children and 242 paupers in the almshouse. ²³

The delinquent blacks numbered 570; the whites 56.

²² Robert Somers, *Southern States Since the War*, 52-53.

²³ *U. S. Census Reports* (1880), Vol. XXI, pp. xii, xviii, 155, 218, 339, 383.

Among the former, 29 were females. These were distributed in the penitentiary, the county jail, and the city prison. There were 14 at the first institution, 13 at the second, and 2 at the last. 12 of these were incarcerated for a number of years. The men were located at the penitentiary and the county jail. 83 of them were also leased out. Seven men awaited execution, 92 were serving life sentences, and 206 were confined for a term of years. They had been convicted for such crimes as assault, robbery, burglary and murder, but the majority were serving terms for thefts. Of the native born white men imprisoned, 20 were in the penitentiary and 2 were leased out; one was awaiting execution, and 7 were serving a life term.²⁴

Comparisons between the whites and blacks classified as defectives, dependents or delinquents may best be made by a statistical presentation. In this form the numbers of males and females, of native and foreign born of total whites and of Negroes, with the ratio to 1,000,000 of population, are given for the years 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1890. The classifications are made in such order that those groups constituting defectives are placed first, dependents next and delinquents last.

DEFECTIVES

The Blind ²⁵

	Number				Ratio to 1,000,000 of Population			
	1890	1880	1870	1860	1890	1880	1870	1860
Total.....	997	1,100	451	291	866	1,105	639	414
Male.....	504	503	232	145	881	1,026	675	417
Female.....	493	597	219	146	852	1,182	605	410
Native Born.....	990	1,070	434	279	865	1,083	622	402
Foreign Born.....	7	30	17	12	1,116	3,903	2,106	1,202
White.....	395	434	188	161	855	1,110	649	553
Colored.....	602	666	263	130	874	1,102	632	315

²⁴ *U. S. Census Reports* (1880), Vol. XXI, 534, 542.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Table 65, 307; (1890) Vol. on Insane, Blind, etc., 669.

THE NEGRO POPULATION

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The Insane ²⁶

	Number				Ratio to 1,000,000 of Population			
	1890	1880	1870	1860	1890	1880	1870	1860
Total.....	912	1,112	333	317	792	1,117	472	450
Male.....	466	503	158	78	814	1,026	459	225
Female.....	446	609	175	239	771	1,205	484	670
Native Born.....	886	1,077	321	313	774	1,090	460	451
Foreign Born.....	26	35	12	4	4,147	4,554	1,486	401
White.....	470	651	238	297	1,017	1,664	822	1,020
Colored.....	442	461	95	20	641	763	228	48

The Feeble Minded ²⁷

	Number				Ratio to 1,000,000 of Population			
	1890	1880	1870	1860	1890	1880	1870	1860
Total.....	1,805	1,588	465	403	1,568	1,595	659	573
Male.....	971	924	279	229	1,697	1,884	811	659
Female.....	834	664	186	174	1,441	1,314	514	488
Native Born.....	1,801	1,581	465	401	1,573	1,600	667	578
Foreign Born.....	4	7	.....	2	638	911	.....	200
White.....	846	806	285	270	1,831	2,061	984	927
Colored.....	959	782	180	133	1,392	1,294	433	322

DEPENDENTS

Paupers in the Almshouse ²⁸

	Number				Ratio to 1,000,000 of Population			
	1890	1880	1870	1860	1890	1880	1870	1860
Total.....	578	519	2,071	1,439	502	521	2,935	2,045
Male.....	245	206	.....	.....	428	420	.....	.....
Female.....	333	313	.....	.....	575	620	.....	.....
Native Born.....	539	474	1,944	1,404	471	480	2,859	2,024
Foreign Born.....	39	45	77	35	6,220	5,855	9,537	3,505
White.....	367	277	965	.....	794	708	3,145	.....
Colored.....	211	242	1,106	.....	306	400	2,660	.....

²⁶ *U. S. Census Reports*, (1880) Vol. XXI, Table 2, 6; (1890) Vol. on Insane, Blind, etc., 160.

²⁷ *U. S. Census Report*, (1880) Vol. XXI, Table 34, 184; (1890) Vol. on Insane, Blind, etc., 246.

²⁸ *U. S. Census Reports*, (1880) Vol. XXI, p. 451; (1890) Vol. on Crime, Pauperism, etc., 657.

DELINQUENTS

Prisoners ²⁹

	Number				Ratio to 1,000,000 of Population			
	1890	1880	1870	1860	1890	1880	1870	1860
Total.....	1,184	626	732	88	1,029	629	1,037	125
Male.....	1,101	587	.....	.....	1,924	1,197	.....	.....
Female.....	83	39	.....	.....	143	77	.....	.....
Native Born.....	1,178	621	714	57	1,029	629	1,024	82
Foreign Born.....	6	5	18	31	957	651	2,229	3,104
White.....	123	56	148	.....	266	143	511	.....
Colored.....	1,061	570	584	.....	1,540	943	1,404	.....

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Table 115, 482; (1890) Vol. on Crime, Pauperism and Benevolence, 9.

CHAPTER II

THE CONFUSION OF THE TRANSITION

Immediately after the Civil War the situation was perplexing. No one knew what the South would do. This section had been defeated, but its spirit had not been conquered. There were those who understood the irreversible changes and were disposed to act in good faith. They called upon all classes to bear with the evils of the hour, to look beyond them into the future, and "so to legislate that these two races, living together with interests coexistent and inseparable, shall be mutually benefited."¹ But, being in the minority, they had not sufficient influence to control the restless elements. A spirit of bitterness and persecution manifested itself toward the Negroes. They were abused outside the immediate protection of the Union forces by men who announced their determination to take the law into their own hands, in defiance of Federal authority. As the whites had lost confidence in their war leaders, however, quiet in most parts seemed at first to be the rule.²

The observer could not fail to notice the conspicuous absence of that national patriotism, which is fundamental in the making of a united nation. The attitude of the people in those districts not subject to military control was that of "concealed and, in some instances, of open hostility," though there were some who strove to promote a thorough reconciliation between the United States Government and their people. Others were eager to make the necessary

¹ *Daily News*, Aug. 28, 1866.

² This statement is based largely on facts obtained from the following: U. S. Grant, *Report on Conditions in the South, 1865*; Carl Schurz, *Report on the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana*; Sidney Andrews, *The South Since the War*; Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Amongst the Contrabands*; Mary Ames, *From a New England Woman's Diary*; Laura M. Towne, *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*; Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters from Port Royal*; Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*; *The Daily News*; *The Daily Courier*; and *The Nation*.

concessions to have themselves restored immediately to power to arrange the new order to their own liking. Then there were the young men who, still hoping that the Confederacy would achieve its independence, inflamed the public mind with radical talk.³ Most of the people, the ignorant whites especially, had no definite conception of the situation and might be easily swayed in almost any direction.

The prevalent desire among the aggressive whites seemed to be, if they could not retain their Negroes as slaves, to get rid of them entirely. Some thought that the freedmen should be deported, for they might be easily excited to kill off their former masters, and believing that this would not be done they sought their fortunes in Brazil.⁴ Others indulged the hope of removing the Negro population to make room for white immigrants, or for Coolies and Chinese.⁵ In some sections, especially where the soil is more adapted to the cultivation of cereals than the raising of staples requiring much drudgery, the farmers appeared to be inclined to drive the Negroes from their plantations. There was a disposition among some of the planters of the northwestern section and a few other districts to set adrift the Negroes as soon as they secured the crops which the freedmen had cultivated during the summer of 1865. Negroes should not remain there upon any footing of equality with white persons in that district.

Expressing the sentiment of a goodly number of his fellow citizens, a contributor to the *Daily News* on September 14, 1865, said: "Two courses are presented—the one to exclude, the other to absorb the Negro; the one to eliminate him,—throw a sort of social parenthesis around him and pass on as best we may, without him, to the continuance of our course; the other to retain him in individual contacts and association and bear him on as a necessary constituent

³ *Daily News*, Aug. 21, 1865; June 19, July 6, 1866.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Aug. 29, 31, Dec. 30, 1865; Nov. 17, 1866; *Daily News*, Nov. 25, 1865.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 23, Sept. 2, Oct. 19, 1865.

of our society into all possible pursuits." Practical men soon saw the unwisdom of deportation, and free Negro labor being the only thing in immediate prospect, most citizens set about to solve the problem of making such labor compulsory by permanent regulations. An immediate adjustment, however, was impossible, for the emancipation itself had suddenly effected an unfortunate antagonism of the two races. The Negro felt that he had been wronged in not having his freedom earlier, and the white man believed that he had been robbed in being deprived of his slave property.

The emancipation of the slaves was submitted to only in so far as chattel slavery in the old form could not be continued. But, although the freedman was no longer considered the property of the individual master, he was considered the slave of society. The whites had much difficulty in abandoning the idea that the blacks were property by natural right. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, therefore, "they treated the freedmen just as their profit, caprice or passion might dictate."⁶ Certain planters made contracts with their former slaves avowedly for the object of keeping them together on their plantations that they might have them near at hand and thus more easily reduce them to their former condition, when, after the restoration of the civil power, the "unconstitutional emancipation proclamation" would be set aside.⁷

Where the army agents were not in operation, the planters, having the whole field to themselves, too often complicated matters by questionable methods.⁸ Here and there they succeeded for a limited period in keeping their former slaves in ignorance or, at least, in doubt about their new rights; but the main agency employed for that purpose was force and intimidation. In many instances Negroes who walked away from the plantations, or were

⁶ *President's Message*, Dec. 18, 1865; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 44, 48, 54, 222-230.

⁷ See references given in Note 3.

⁸ Laura M. Towne, *Letters and Diary*, 167-168.

found upon the roads, were shot or otherwise severely punished.⁹ It was not merely the planters who made the lives of the freedmen intolerable, but also the non-slaveholding whites, who terrorized the country in roving bands. The latter were possessed with a singularly bitter and vindictive feeling against the Negroes since they had ceased to be property. "The pecuniary value which the individual Negro formerly represented having disappeared, the maiming and killing of them seemed to be looked upon by many as one of those venial offences which must be forgiven to the outraged feelings of a wronged and robbed people."¹⁰

Yet the whites did not desire the aid of the army. They felt that the presence of the troops and the assistance of federal agents aggravated rather than solved the problem. It was believed that thereby the two races would become more estranged. "To us it is vital," said the *Daily News* on August 30, 1865, "that the races shall here constitute one continuous and accordant society, but it is not less to them; segregation will not be less fatal to them than to us and can this measure come without it? Can the Negro be instructed that he is injured and in danger,—that his rights are threatened,—his life imperilled,—that a power must be always present to protect him, that he may appeal at pleasure, that for any wrong or caprice he may arraign the white man?"

Writing further on the 26th of August, the editor said: "It is a matter of the very last importance that these relations should be such that no antagonism between the races shall result; that these shall continue intermixed in society, pursuits, and enterprises; that they shall have individual, immediate, and continued intercourse with each other and thus go hand in hand, with common energies, to the achievement of their fortunes and the advancement of the country. But if instead of this they should be teased

⁹ Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 28, and the *Daily Courier*, July 6, 1866.

¹⁰ *President's Message*, Dec. 18, 1865, 20.

apart; there should be distinct attitudes toward each other; if each shall regard each other as foreign to its feeling and interests; if each race shall constitute a distinct society and act within itself and for itself, and thus there shall arise two communities, two social sentiments and societies within the State, the evil will be irreparable. When these bodies shall come to have only external relations to each other, when each shall act from its own standpoint and in their movements necessarily collide upon each other, there can be no hope of peace between them, no plan of reconciliation, no process of intermixture, no mode of reintegrating such antagonistic constituents; but they will stand to oppose each other, stand to contest every question of respective right, stand as the Indians, and the whites have done, in constant hostility towards each other until the painful diorama shall be closed in the extinction of that which shall happen to be the weaker. There can be little question which that is, but it were a sad calamity if this State shall be but one generation at least the battle ground for such a contest.”¹¹

Disorders, however, were not at first widespread. Writing from Columbia, South Carolina, July 6, 1865, a correspondent of *The Nation* said: “Not one among the marvelous events of the war seems to me more marvelous than the almost perfect tranquility in which South Carolina has returned. I can hardly believe that in less than five months since Sherman passed through this place, literally with fire and sword—less than three months since Johnson’s surrender—I should be here attending a Fourth of July celebration, and discussing State rights and slavery as calmly and safely as in New England. Surely this is not the defiant South ‘ground down by the iron heel of despotism’! that we have heard so much about. Here at Columbia, to be sure, and at Orangeburg, there are garrisons of troops; but in the forty miles between we saw no guards—only alternately squads of Confederate soldiers on their way home, and of New York soldiers, marching

¹¹ See *Daily News*, Aug. 21, 26, 1865, and Nov. 17, 1866.

northerly to garrison the upper district. I saw no signs of ill will on either side. Neither is there anything insincere and reluctant in this quiet. As a Southern lady said to me, 'When they fought, they fought; and when they were done, they were done.' ''¹²

Yet this correspondent mentioned a riot in Charleston of which he heard the day before. Writing from Charleston on the same situation, July 12, 1865, moreover, he further said that the favorable judgment which he had expressed in his former letter must be understood as applying to the upper districts of the State. In the Low Country and especially in Charleston he did not think the feeling was so healthy. In the Upper Country, where the small plantations prevailed and the slave owners had the personal management of their slaves, the masters were inclined to treat them kindly. In the Low Country of large plantations of absentee ownership where the overseers handle slaves roughly the Negroes did not fare so well.¹³

The comments of the press were interesting. One writer informed the Negroes that they had better go to work. They were free, but the government could not feed them so easily as it had emancipated them. The Negroes needed to learn that they had obligations.¹⁴ Another, advocating a system of well paid labor which would induce either black or white to work, still insisted that to reach this end a new code of laws should be provided; for no one should be allowed to strut or loaf about without a visible means of support and such as refuse to work should be arrested as vagrants.¹⁵ A correspondent from Sumter urged that steps be taken to control Negroes. If left to themselves "uncontrolled, uninstructed, and uncared for, we cannot indulge in a very hopeful view of their future."¹⁶

¹² *The Nation*, I, 106.

¹³ *The Nation*, I, 107. See also *Letters from the Commercial Correspondent of an Association of Manufacturers*, 1865, 7.

¹⁴ *Daily Courier*, April 25, 1865.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, June 28, 1865.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1865.

Another asked for measures for the proper direction of labor.¹⁷

This sort of handling men, however, could not succeed. The new spirit which emancipation had awakened had undoubtedly developed itself in some individuals, especially young men, to an offensive degree. Hence cases of "insolence and retaliation" on the part of freedmen occurred. But such occurrences were comparatively rare, for "insolence" was too often merely talking back to a white man or refusing to do what he commanded. On the whole, the conduct of the freedmen was far more submissive than anybody expected. The acts of violence perpetrated by freedmen against white persons did not stand in any proportion to those committed by whites against Negroes, who at first had no means of redress.¹⁸ Every such occurrence was sure to be noticed in the southern papers, and few of such were published.¹⁹

"The first southern men with whom I came into contact after my arrival at Charleston," said Schurz in 1865, "designated the general conduct of the emancipated slaves as surprisingly good. Some went even so far as to call it admirable. The connection in which they used these laudatory terms was this: A great many colored people while in slavery had undoubtedly suffered much hardship and submitted to great wrongs, partly aggravated by the individual wilfulness and cruelty of their masters and overseers. They were suddenly set free; and not only that: their masters, but a short time ago almost omnipotent on their domains, found themselves, after their defeat in the war, all at once face to face with their former slaves as a conquered and powerless class. Never was the temp-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 3, 1865.

¹⁸ *President's Message*, Dec. 18, 1865, 17-18; and Emile Jonveaux, *L'Amerique Actuelle*, 84-85.

¹⁹ *President's Message*, Dec. 18, 1865, 30; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 44, 48, 54, 222, 230. With the exception of frequent thefts by poverty-stricken Negroes very few offences of the freedmen are mentioned in the *News* and the *Courier*.

tation to indulge in acts of vengeance for wrongs suffered more strongly presented than to the colored people of the south; but no instance of such individual revenge was then on record, nor have I since heard of any case of violence that could be traced to such motives. The transition of the southern Negro from slavery to freedom was untarnished by any deeds of blood, and the apprehension so extensively entertained and so pathetically declaimed upon by many, that the sudden and general emancipation of the slaves would at once result in 'all the horrors of St. Domingo,' proved utterly groundless. This was the first impression I received after my arrival in the south, and I received it from the mouths of late slaveholders. Nor do I think the praise was unjustly bestowed. In this respect the emancipated slaves of the south can challenge comparison with any race long held in servitude and suddenly set free."²⁰

The army was ordered to the scene to maintain the peace and the Freedmen's Bureau was established to take care of these problems; but they faced tremendous difficulties, and because of ill-defined duties tended to complicate matters. Referring to the gravity of this situation, Charles Lowe said: "To make it worse many well-disposed but ill-judging friends of the colored people are busy among them, inflaming them by exciting appeals, and giving them exalted ideas of their own position which tend to anything than encourage a patient assumption of their duties before them."^{20a} A reporter of *The Nation* in 1865 believed that it was not from the native disposition of the Negroes themselves, but from the bad influence of some of their friends, particularly soldiers, that the hostility towards the whites and the serious interruptions to labor had arisen. "In the best of our regiments," said he, "there will be a few mischief makers, who persuade

²⁰ Schurz, *Report on Condition of the South in 1865*, 27.

^{20a} Charles Lowe, *Condition and Prospect of the South*, 6.

the field hands that they should refuse to work, that they are the rightful owners of the land, that they should leave their homes and go to the islands where land will be given them. The colored people upon the plantations are, therefore, in a very unsettled frame of mind, and it requires constant watchfulness and delicate management to keep them quiet, and persuade them to work faithfully until New Year's when the contract will expire." ²¹

Sidney Andrews reported that further observation of the agents of the Freedmen's Bureau and of the way in which they did the business intrusted to them confirmed him more strongly in the opinion that at least half of them were wholly unfit for the position they occupied. He believed that they could not be trusted to administer justice between the planters and the freedmen, for they too generally sided with the former, even in cases where the right course was not difficult to choose." ²² General Grant believed that many of these agents were inefficient and recommended that they be made subject to the army to secure a more efficient administration.

The evils of the hour were set forth in a manifest of the citizens of Abbeville in July, 1865, presenting their views as to the remedies required. These were "the emigration of laborers, the devastation of the country, the want of a circulating medium, the danger of the conflict of the races." ²³ A reporter of *The Nation* felt that they had omitted one evil, namely, the terrorism and brutality exercised toward the blacks wherever the Union army had not gone, and which no doubt had been largely instrumental in driving them from their homes. He did not know that these existed in Abbeville, but he was sure that they did exist elsewhere. ²⁴

"Some Negroes who did go to work abandoned it again when they discovered that they were being defrauded out

²¹ *The Nation*, I, 107. See also *Letters from the Commercial Correspondent of an Association of Manufacturers*, 1865, 7.

²² Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 203.

²³ *The Nation*, I, 106.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 107.

of what they actually earned. The disposition to "control" the Negroes after the old fashion subsequently developed itself in Eastern South Carolina to such an extent that General John P. Hatch, the military commander, had to take precaution against it. It had come to his knowledge that, in some of the contracts made between planters and freedmen, there had been introduced a clause establishing a system of peonage—the freedman binding himself to work out any debt to his employer he might thereafter incur. The General proclaimed that all contracts were not simply worded. While acknowledging the emancipation of the Negro, such expressions as 'freed by the acts of the military forces of the United States' were used. The attempt was to introduce into the contract something which might have the appearance of an intention, at some future day, to contest the question of the emancipation of the Negroes. Contracts made under authority from his headquarters would be understood as merely temporary arrangements, to insure the cultivation of the ground for the present season. Any contract made under such authority, which contained provisions tending to peonage, would be considered null. The officers having charge of contracts were required to examine them carefully; and when they were found to contain such a clause, would notify the planters that there must be made new contracts from which the objectionable feature would be omitted.²⁵ Early in 1865, a representative of the Government had given personal attention to this matter. He had appointed a Commissioner of Free Labor to administer such affairs. This official neither interfered with the making of contracts nor imposed any uniform rate, but exercised the right to reject them if unfair to either party and to oblige both to keep them.

Judging from the testimony of travelers, one would think that during 1865 the Negroes had been working and the economic condition was not distressing. Some of the plantations along the seacoast, in the aristocratic portion of

²⁵ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 85.

the State, were abandoned by the proprietors and cultivated on their own account by the Negroes, who were getting excellent crops. Many of the planters who had remained were disposed to do the right thing by their hands, but those Negroes who were carrying on the plantations by themselves were making better crops than those whose masters remained with them and superintended their work.

Sidney Andrews observed in 1865: "Some of the cotton and corn fields, through which we passed, were in a decidedly bad state of cultivation; others better, but hardly any quite satisfactory, until we reached the plantation to which our journey was directed. Then the appearance of the crops suddenly changed; the fields were free from weeds, the cotton plants healthy, and the corn fields promising a heavy yield. Everything bespoke thrift and industry." ²⁶

Returning from St. Helena in 1865, Doctor Richard Fuller was asked what he thought of the experiment of free labor, as exhibited among his former slaves, and how it contrasted with the old order of things. "I never saw St. Helena look so well," was his instant reply. "I never saw as much land there under cultivation—never saw the same general evidences of prosperity, and never saw the Negroes themselves appearing so well or so contented." ²⁷ Others noticed, however, that the islands about Beaufort were in a better condition than those nearer the encampments of the United States soldiers. Wherever poultry could be profitably peddled in the camps, cotton had not been grown, nor had the Negroes developed, so readily, into industrious and orderly communities.

Carl Schurz felt warranted in 1865 in asserting: "Many freedmen—not single individuals, but whole "plantation gangs"—are working well; others are not. The difference in their efficiency coincides in a great measure with a certain difference in the conditions under which they live. The conclusion lies near, that if the conditions under which they work well become general, their efficiency as free laborers

²⁶ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 98.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

will become general also, aside from individual exceptions. Certain it is, that by far the larger portion of the work done in the South is done by freedmen.”²⁸

Whitelaw Reid, moreover, said in 1865: “Whoever has read what I have written about the cotton fields of St. Helena will need no assurance that another cardinal sin of the slave, his laziness—“inborn and ineradicable,” as we were always told by his masters—is likewise disappearing under the stimulus of freedom and necessity Dishonesty and indolence, then, were the creation of slavery, not the necessary and constitutional faults of the Negro character.”²⁹

The question about the slaves being self-supporting, however, no longer agitated the minds of careful observers. As free laborers before the Civil War, Negroes in South Carolina had demonstrated their efficiency. They had acquired almost every species of property. In 1859 there were in Charleston 355 free Negroes who owned 277 slaves worth \$55,000 and other property, mostly real estate, valued at \$778,423. They were paying \$12,342.02 in taxes on their property. Negro refugees who had settled upon the abandoned lands before the close of the war had also shown that they would work. The way had been prepared by the act of confiscation of 1862, and General Sherman’s Order No. 15, which opened the abandoned land to the “contrabands.” On St. Helena, and wherever else they had had the opportunity, the Negroes had bought titles to their farms. They had erected their own cabins, secured whatever cheap furniture they contained, and clothed themselves far better than their masters ever provided for them. All who had been established on such lands more than a year had paid back to the Government the rations drawn in their first destitution. They had stocked their plantations, paying the highest prices, and often bidding against white men, at the auction sales of condemned Government property. One man had paid three hundred dollars in cash for a con-

²⁸ *President’s Message*, Dec. 18, 1865, 29.

²⁹ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 12.

demned Government horse, and many had paid prices ranging from a hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars. A single horse only was needed to cultivate one of their little places, and according to Whitelaw Reid, "the instances had been rare in which, after a year or two of work, the Negro was not able to command enough money to secure it."³⁰

Gen. Saxton, who had in his district more than 100,000 Negroes, said that all except those swept in the wake of Sherman's march were absolutely self-supporting in 1865. Even the rations issued to the Negroes were charged to them and thrifty Negroes made all haste to cease depending upon the Government lest their debt should swell to rather larger proportions. Most of the older, settled Negroes, who were originally dependent upon Government support, had already repaid the advances thus made them; and, besides, many had accumulated what was for them a handsome competence. General Saxton settled nearly 30,000 Negroes on lands on the Sea Islands and adjacent plantations and 17,000 were self supporting within a year. While 12,000 or 13,000 were still drawing rations it was distinctly understood that they and their farms would be held responsible for the payment. In other such cases the Government had found that such a debt was a "safe and short one." None of these Negroes had been forced to come and the locations upon the plantations had been made to the satisfaction of the Negroes themselves.

To some extent this prosperity was delusive, just as the prosperity of the whole country, during the same period, had been delusive. The soldiers paid the Negroes three or four prices for their vegetables, eggs and poultry; and when their cotton was ready for market it brought, in some cases, nearly ten times the old price. These Negroes, however, exhibited the industry which deserves prosperity and, in most cases, the thrift which insures its continuance. Their money was spent for articles they needed for stocking their farms, clothing their families, or, in some way, better-

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

ing their condition. Yet, it was not always spent economically. Their purchases at times became so liberal that the military authorities had to interfere occasionally to prevent what they considered extravagance.

They worked less, and had more time for self-improvement than when slaves. The former task, which the slaves worked at from sunrise to sunset, was then readily performed by the freedman in six or seven hours. Still, the exports from the Sea Islands were not as great as during the existence of slavery. At that time the Negroes were mere machines, run with as little loss as possible to the single end of making money for their masters. Now, as it was in the West Indies, emancipation had enlarged the Negro's wants, and, instead of producing solely to export, he was producing to consume. "Then he ate with his fingers from the hominy pot, in the fireplace; now he must have plates, knives and forks, with a table on which to spread them. Then he wore the scant summer and winter suits of Negro cloth; now he must have working suits and Sunday suits, and each must be cut with some vague reference to prevailing fashions, and made up by hands that, under the old regime, would have been beside his own in the cotton field."³¹

The most discouraging feature was the utter helplessness of the white community in the face of the terrible problem. Almost any thoughtful traveler could see that the majority of the whites were parasites, idlers and semi-vagabonds, according to Sidney Andrews. "The Negro, as bad as his condition is," said he, "seems to me, on the whole, to accommodate himself more easily than the whites to the changed situation. I should say that the question at issue in the South is not 'What shall be done with the Negro?' but 'What shall be done with the whites?'"³² The blacks managed to live comfortably for the most part and helped each other; but the whites, accustomed to have all their affairs managed by an aristocracy which was then

³¹ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 115-116.

³² Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 223.

ruined, seemed powerless. They chose committees and reported cases of suffering, but any organized action on a large scale could not be expected. It was hoped that aid for the whites would come from the North, for fearful distress from hunger was inevitable.³³

Dr. Richard Fuller found a number of the whites living solely on Government rations. He hastened to offer them assistance. Their Northern relatives had already repeatedly volunteered similar offers, but they refused them all, and persisted in living on the bacon and hard bread issued by the United States Commissary. They explained that they preferred to make the Washington Government support them. It had robbed them of all they had, and now the very least it could do was to pay their expenses. Every penny of cost to which they put it was so much got back from the fortunes of which it had deprived them, by waging this wicked war for their subjugation.³⁴

On the other hand, the reports from the Northwestern or mountain region of the State indicate little prospect of suffering. "I tell you," said a South Carolinian, from Greenville, "the South could have continued the war for ten years, if it had had your Northern gift of perseverance. We were neither exhausted of men nor of provisions; it was only that the flame of enthusiasm had burnt out. I have myself traveled, within the past month, through sections of South Carolina, from Greenville to Columbia, and thence north-east and north-west, so as to know accurately the condition of the crops in one-half the State. There is no trouble about starvation. The people are not suffering, except in such isolated cases as you will always find, and there is a larger breadth of grains planted than ever before. With reasonable care there ought to be no starvation this winter."³⁵

The exact economic condition of the people in the State, however, cannot be easily determined from what the native

³³ *The Nation*, I, 106.

³⁴ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 73-74.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 70-78.

whites said from time to time. Looking through the newspapers, however, there are various reports as to what the actual condition was.³⁶ It differed from place to place in the proportion that the various elements cooperated for the public good. Where there existed good feeling between the army officers and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau on the one hand, and the native whites on the other, the Negroes were generally induced to work on the contract basis and few of them deserted their plantations. While because of the chaotic condition the crops obtained were not exceptional, working under these circumstances the freedmen generally produced the average crop. Interruption to labor was not the only cause of the decreased production. Poor seed was used in certain parts in the planting of cotton, fearful winds injured the plant here and there, elsewhere the corn was ruined by too much rain, and rust appeared as another difficulty. Furthermore, the land at the beginning of 1865 had already deteriorated because of the failure to use the normal supply of manures and fertilizers and because of the production of provision crops for the army supply rather than the crops of ante-bellum time.

Yet although we read that in April and May the people were perishing for want of food, there appeared reports to the contrary. The *Courier* published on May 26, 1865, a letter from a correspondent in Orangeburg, stating that the crops promised well, that much planting had been done and that the Negroes remained willingly with their old masters when they were well used. A letter from Sumter to the *Courier* on July 24, 1865, said that the crops were good, but not much had been planted because of the interruption of the labor supply. In his letter in the *Courier*, of May 5, 1866, the Sumter correspondent said: "The freedmen too, as a general thing, are working with zeal and earnestness exceeding the expectations of our people at the beginning of the year." Everything was not going well in that section of the State, but the correspondent attributed the untoward circumstances to the poor cotton seed planted, high

³⁶ See the *News* and *Courier* for 1865 and 1866.

winds, heavy rains, and rust. On September 12, 1866, this same correspondent wrote the *Courier*: "The provision crop is short, but the cotton yield will probably exceed the estimates made some time ago. In some neighborhoods it will reach what is called an average crop." On the twentieth of June the *Courier* printed a report from Laurens to the effect that the average yield in Newberry, Edgefield, and Abbeville had been predicted in spite of the gloomy situation formerly reported. There the army officers and the planters had been coöperating for the public good and troubles afflicting other communities had not developed.

It seemed, however, that where the whites were satisfied the Negroes were dissatisfied. Near the end of the year 1866, therefore, the Negroes were astir seeking new landlords to improve their condition. Much apprehension was felt then as to how the situation would be the following year. The correspondent of the *Courier* writing from Sumter on August 10, 1866, had already said that the contracts of 1866 would scarcely be renewed. "The freedmen had serious objections to the terms and conditions, which gave rise to acts of injustice against which in many cases there was really no redress. And the difficulties and disabilities under which they labored in their attempts to obtain legal indemnity against a wrong does constitute another reasonable ground of complaint." He reported to the *Courier*, moreover, on November 4, 1866, an organized movement among the Negroes to better their condition. They held a large assembly to deal with the problems of the hour, this being a meeting on a larger scale than that of many other such which had been held for that purpose in that section. During the four hours of this meeting the correspondent reported there was not uttered a word about Negro suffrage and other political questions. The keynote of the meeting was to secure "a fair and remunerative reward for labor." The contract system had proved to be unequal and unjust and they were advised to resort to the share system.

The overthrow of the Confederacy, however, could not mean anything but disaster. No human agency could in a short time find a remedy for such serious disorders which are always connected with a period of precipitous transition. The extinction of slavery dislocated the labor supply, for few Negroes considered themselves free if they had to remain in the service of the same master and on terms not much more favorable than those of slavery itself. To seek the employ of at least another landlord was a natural desire of anyone feeling the impulse of freedom. Confusion, therefore, was inevitable.³⁷

Few Negroes desired to work for wages on the contract basis immediately after the war, although many of them had to do so or suffer starvation. The objection to this system was that it resembled slavery too much, and they believed that they might earn more independently. The small wages that the planter could pay at that time did not encourage them to make such contracts as the stipend usually ranged between seven and twelve dollars a month. To the low wages, of course, were generally added such considerations as free shelter, rations and firewood, the use of a small parcel of land for gardening, poultry, and stock raising. The farm work was necessarily heavy and especially so in the cases of hard taskmasters, who imposed upon Negroes unable to compel the employer to respect their economic rights. The hours, moreover, were unusually long. Work commenced at sunrise, the laborer was given a few minutes for breakfast, about one hour for dinner at noon, and then toiled until sunset, even when the days were fifteen to sixteen hours long in summer. There was not very much to do in case of rain or bad weather, because most farm work could not be done under such circumstances. Such labor, with the exception of a few indoor tasks, could not be performed during the winter months.

For some time the situation continued critical. A small minority of the freedmen, having an erroneous idea as to the meaning of liberty, undertook for a few months to en-

³⁷ Mary Ames, *From a New England Woman's Diary*, passim.

joy their freedom without working to earn a living. They were jealous of anything which seemed like an attempt to get them back into their former positions. Various disturbances, therefore, ensued as a result of this attitude. Some Negroes refused to work themselves and they did not want white men to come into the State for such a purpose. Such freedmen had the erroneous idea that economically the master and the slave had exchanged positions. The land of the former owners developed by the sweat of the brow of the slaves should be turned over to the freedmen to do with it as they would.

These ideas were not original with the Negro. Many of the Union soldiers believed this themselves and so informed the freedmen.³⁸ The United States Government, moreover, in apportioning among the freedmen parcels of abandoned lands tended to confirm this belief. The Negroes finally got little encouragement out of these grants because the United States Government settled some Negroes on lands for three years only, and in other cases granted such titles as it could convey. Then came the conflicting administration of affairs through the army officers on one hand and the representatives of the Freedmen's Bureau on the other.

Moving from place to place, then, without fixed abode, the Negroes suffered all sorts of privation. Large numbers of them were taken into the army camps as was done prior to the close of the war, and cared for there until they could be settled upon the abandoned lands. But the influx of Negro refugees with Sherman and the suddenness of emancipation forced upon the public a larger number than could be easily handled. This excessive number directed their steps to the towns and cities of the State where they lived in most unsanitary congested Negro districts. They lacked clothing and shelter, and they could not earn food. Women bearing children could not properly care for them and large numbers of them died in infancy.³⁹

³⁸ *The Nation*, I, 106; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 97, 98, 203.

³⁹ Mary Ames, *From a New England Woman's Diary*, passim; Henry Latham, *Black and White*, 269-271; Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days*

Speaking of their accumulation in these centers in 1865, General Grant said: "In such cases I think it will be found that vice and disease will tend to the extermination or great reduction of the colored race."⁴⁰ Travelers who came into South Carolina years thereafter also expressed the opinion that in a few years the Negro race would become extinct as a result of the conditions under which they had to live in the cities and towns.⁴¹ Most whites proclaimed to all inquiries that the all but immediate extinction of the Negro race was at hand. They did the Negro the injustice, however, of concluding that he desired to live in that state rather than to learn from history that any persons thus emancipated and thus situated thereafter would tend to such a low level. Those who sympathized with the Negro were of the opinion that this prophecy was a case of desire being father to the thought and they, therefore, urged protection by keeping vigilance over the situation in that state, believing that something might be done to carry out such a program.

From the disturbed areas of the State a considerable number of Negroes migrated. They were going westward and southward to Mississippi, to Florida, and to Texas, where the land yielded better harvests. These new soils were less impoverished and the planters there had suffered less. A few went to Liberia, but, finding that climate inhospitable, they returned to discourage others planning to emigrate.⁴² Seeing the ill effects of this, Henry Latham believed that South Carolina had fought to its last gasp and would be very desolate.⁴³ Some of the planters, moreover,

Among the Contrabands, 217, 237, 241; W. P. Dixon, *White Conquest*, 140; and F. B. Zincke, *Last Winter in the United States*, 97.

⁴⁰ *Letter of General U. S. Grant on Conditions in the South after the War*.

⁴¹ *Teresina in America*, chapter VI; Jules Leclercq, *Un Été en Amérique*, 123; *National Quarterly Review*, XXXVIII, 132; Henry Latham, *Black and White*, 220; and F. B. Zincke, *Last Winter in the United States*, 106; *Daily News*, Sept. 12, 1865.

⁴² *Daily News*, Nov. 5, 1866.

⁴³ Henry Latham, *Black and White*, 127-128.

must have had the same impression for Robert Somers, another traveler, learned that the governor had to give safe conducts to Negroes leaving the State.⁴⁴

To make matters worse there came to the State almost with the Union Army a number of speculators who, profiting by the extravagance of the soldiers and the gullibility of the freedmen, made handsome fortunes during these days of a mania for speculation in contradistinction to actual business.⁴⁵ These interlopers believed that they would accumulate fabulous riches by availing themselves of the opportunities offered by the new order of things, especially in the Sea Islands. They settled among the Negroes there and proclaimed a new day for that section. They charged exorbitant prices for what they sold and in addition swindled the customers as far as they could without getting into the clutches of the law. "One man who came into this section by working his passage down as a deck hand," said Whitelaw Reid in 1865, "accumulated in a short time what would be considered a fortune in New York. He had failed as a merchant and had become penniless, but by this time he had not only paid all of his debts, but had accumulated sufficient wealth to class him among the rich."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Robert Somers, *Southern States Since the War*, 58.

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters from Port Royal*, 290-324; Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Among the Contrabands*, 259-266; and Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Among the Contrabands*, 220.

⁴⁶ Such speculators hoped to make Port Royal a port which would eclipse the former glory of Charleston. They projected a railroad nearly due north to Branchville, a distance of 70 to 80 miles, where it would connect with the whole railroad system of the South, and make Beaufort and Hilton Head absolutely independent of Charleston and Savannah. "Charleston can never have the trade of this coast again, you know," said they; "the North hates it too much, and in fact, the port never ought to be opened again; and if we can only get this railroad connection, our harbor is so much finer than any other on the coast, that we will inevitably have the greatest city south of Baltimore." Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, 124-125.

CHAPTER III

REVITALIZED SLAVERY CURBED

Thinking that all of these ills resulted from an unsuccessful effort to make the slave a free man, the whites decided that forced labor was the proper remedy to restore as much of the old regime as possible. Well might an observer, then, writing on the temper of the people express doubt as to whether, with their full admission that slavery was dead, it would be safe to trust legislation to the people of the State. They said that it would be, that they desired the harmony and welfare of all classes and had no thought of any reactionary measures. In this there was little doubt that the best and most intelligent were sincere. But the best and most intelligent did not form a majority, and it was certain that among a portion of the planters a very fiendish spirit still prevailed, and that a still larger portion were submitting with no good grace to the "indignity" of treating with their former slaves on terms of equality. If all were sincere and earnest in this, moreover, it would still be legislation by a *class*, and, with the best of intention, such legislation would almost certainly be more or less biased by the prejudices and interests of those who possessed the power. Fairminded students of the situation believed that no one could help looking with anxiety upon any plan of reconstruction which did not admit the most intelligent of the Negroes to a participation of political power, and at the same time exclude the ignorant and degraded whites.¹

Something had to be done immediately, however, for when the Confederacy collapsed there followed a period wherein no government and no legal protection of life, liberty or property existed in South Carolina. The president of the United States by a proclamation dated June 13, 1865, therefore appointed Benjamin F. Perry provisional

¹ *The Nation*, I, 106.

governor of the State of South Carolina. This officer was charged to call a convention for the purpose of altering or amending the constitution of the State so as to restore South Carolina to its constitutional relations with the United States. The proclamation comprised, also, instructions relating to procedure, a definition of the eligibility of the electors, and of members of the convention, and the authorization that the convention or legislature to follow should prescribe the qualifications of persons to hold office under the constitution and laws of the State.

Pursuant to these instructions, the provisional governor authorized the election of delegates who should assemble in convention, at Columbia, on September 13, 1865. Upon the approach of this convention there was still much speculation as to what would be done. To some extent the duty of this body had already been determined in that practically all of the whites believed that slavery would have to be abolished by law and provision should be made to give validity to public acts since the suspension of civil government. Approaching the race question, however, few persons felt sanguine as to what should be done. The editor of the *Daily News* had pointed out that this would be the great difficulty of the convention, for he evidently had in mind that this body would respect the recent changes which have brought the races into contact in the relations of natural equality. "True we may not discriminate against him (the Negro)," said the editor in the issue of September 13, 1865, ". . . and this feeling of a large part of this country will, of course, oppose a policy which would tend to recognize any natural difference between the races here which they have determined shall not exist. We may not save the Negro if we propose to save him as a Negro."

This writer, of unusual influence in molding the sentiment of the State, had never conceded, however, that the Negro would make good as a free man. Knowing from history that the emancipation of the slaves had disrupted the labor situation and thus worked unusual injury to the planters, as in the case of the West Indies and Guiana, he believed

that such ruin was inevitable in this country. On September 15, 1865, therefore, he had voiced the sentiment of many in raising the question as to whether the State could supply the place of slavery in the control and discipline of an inferior race. He believed that such could be done. However, in order to avoid trouble from without he suggested that there should be enacted laws of general application to reach this end, although without being restricted to the Negro they might bear heavily upon the white man.²

The keynote of the policy to be pursued toward the freedmen was here sounded by the provisional governor himself. He opposed the extension of suffrage to the freedmen on the ground that their widespread ignorance and degraded condition incapacitated them for a wise use of this privilege.³ Such an action would reduce the influence of the poor white man and give to the affluent an unwarranted power. According to the governor, moreover, "this is a white man's government and intended for white men only." "The Supreme Court of the United States," he declared, "has decided that the Negro is not an American citizen under the Federal Constitution." In consideration of these circumstances as well as the undisputed right of each State to determine who, within her borders, shall be enfranchised, the governor urged that the delegates should "settle this grave question as the interest and honor of the State demanded."⁴

The constitution framed by the convention of 1865 provided that the slaves in South Carolina having been emancipated by the action of the United States authorities, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the parties should have been duly convicted, should ever be reestablished in the State. Suffrage, however, was restricted to free white men of the age of 21 years, not paupers nor non-commissioned officers, nor private soldiers of the army, nor seamen nor marines of the

² *Daily News*, Sept. 15, 1865. For other views see the *Daily Courier*, July 11, 13, 14, 27, 1865.

³ The South Carolina Convention (speech of P. F. Perry), 1865, 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

navy of the United States. No one but a voter could hold office. It was expressly provided, too, that no person should be eligible to take or retain a seat in the House of Representatives or the Senate of the State unless he was a free white man.⁵ The civic rights of the Negro received little attention. Freedmen of Charleston memorialized the convention for such consideration, but the delegate from that city did not have the courage to press their claims.^{5a}

The new constitution further provided that for each "District" in the State there should be established an inferior court to be styled "the District Court" which should have jurisdiction of all civil causes wherein one or both parties were persons of color, and of all criminal causes wherein the accused was a person of color. The District Courts should have exclusive jurisdiction, subject to appeal of all civil causes, where one or both of the parties were persons of color, and of all criminal cases wherein the accused was a person of color and also of all cases of misdemeanor affecting the person or property of a person of color and of all cases of bastardy, and all cases of vagrancy, not tried before a Magistrate.⁶

Finding it impracticable to incorporate the whole Black Code into the constitution, however, the convention authorized a commission to report such to the next General Assembly. This body, therefore, enacted a measure preliminary to an "Act to establish and regulate the domestic relations of persons of color and to amend the law in relation to paupers, vagrancy, and bastardy and other measures having to do with Negroes." This act provided that all free Negroes, mulattoes, mestizos, all freedmen and freedwomen and all descendants through either sex of any of these persons should be known as persons of color. The regulations concerning slaves were then declared inapplicable to persons of color. Although such persons were not entitled to social or political equality with white persons,

⁵ *South Carolina Constitution of 1865.*

^{5a} *Daily Courier*, Sept. 26, 1865.

⁶ *South Carolina Constitution of 1865.*

they should have the right to acquire, own and dispose of property, to make contracts, to enjoy the fruits of their labor, to sue and be sued and to receive protection under the law in their persons and property. All rights and remedies respecting persons or property, and all duties and liabilities under laws civil and criminal, which applied to white persons, were extended to persons of color subject to modifications made by this and other acts mentioned.^{6a}

To safeguard the peace and property of the planters every precaution was taken by "An Act to amend the Criminal Law." A person of color in the employment of a master engaged in husbandry should not have the right to sell any farm products without having written evidence from such master or some person authorized by him. The purchaser upon conviction of such an offense should be liable to a fine not exceeding \$500 and to suffer imprisonment not exceeding twelve months. The seller should be liable to a fine of at least \$5.00, and at least equal to twice the value of the product sold. If that were not immediately paid he should suffer corporal punishment. It was made a misdemeanor for any person not authorized to write or to give to a person of color a writing which professed to show evidence of the right of that person of color to sell a farm product without such written evidence. Any person convicted of such a misdemeanor should be liable to the same extent as the purchaser mentioned above. It was declared a misdemeanor for a person of color to accept as evidence of his right to sell any product a writing which he knew to be false or counterfeited.⁷

Persons of color were not permitted to serve in the militia of the State. Without permission in writing from the District Judge they were not allowed to keep a fire-arm, sword, or other military weapon, except that the owner of a farm might keep a shot-gun or rifle ordinarily used in hunt-

^{6a} *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, 1864-1865, 271.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

ing, but not a pistol, musket or other fire-arm or weapon appropriate for purposes of war. The possession of such a weapon in violation of law should be punished by a fine equal to twice the value of the weapon so unlawfully kept, and if that be not immediately paid the accused should suffer corporal punishment. It was also unlawful for a person of color to be the owner in whole, or in part, of any distillery where spiritous liquors of any kind were made, or of any establishment where spiritous liquors of any kind were sold by retail. The punishment in this case should be by fine or corporal punishment and hard labor according to the discretion of the "District Judge or Magistrate."⁸

In case a person of color or a white person committed a crime against a person of color, a magistrate might arrest the offender and punish him according to the nature of the case or fine him with sufficient sureties or commit him for trial before the District Court. Upon view of a misdemeanor committed by a person of color any person present might arrest him and take him before a magistrate to be dealt with as the case might require.⁹

Orphan children of color were subjected to compulsory apprenticeship, to which applied the provisions made for a servant under contract.¹⁰ A period of service, rate of wages, hours of labor and task work were specified; and evasion was considered a misdemeanor punishable by infliction of punishment or imposition of a fine.¹¹

⁸ *Ibid.*, 275.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 278.

¹⁰ FORM OF CONTRACT FOR SERVANTS

I (name of servant) do hereby agree with (name of master) to be his (here insert the words "household servant" or "servant in husbandry" as the case may be), from the date hereof, at the wages of (here insert the wages to be paid, by the year or month); and in consideration thereof, I (name of master) agree to receive the said (name of servant) as such servant, and to pay him the said wages this.....day of.....186..

A. B.

C. D.

Witness E. F.

I approve the above contract this.....day of186..

JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

MAGISTRATE

Ibid., 299.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 293.

On farms or in out-door service, the hours of labor, except on Sunday, were to be from sun-rise to sun-set, with a reasonable interval for breakfast and dinner. Servants should rise at the dawn in the morning, feed, water and care for the animals on the farm, do the usual and needful work about the premises, prepare their meals for the day, if required by the master, and begin the farm work or other work by sun-rise. The servant should be careful of all the animals and property of his master, and especially of the animals and implements used by him, should protect the same from injury by other persons, and should be answerable for all property lost, destroyed or injured by his negligence, dishonesty or bad faith.

All lost time, not caused by the act of the master, and all losses occasioned by neglect of duties might be deducted from the wages of the servant; and food, nursing and other necessaries for the servant, while he might be absent from work on account of sickness or other cause, might also be deducted from his wages. Servants should be quiet and orderly in their quarters, at their work, and on the premises, should extinguish their lights and fires, and retire to rest at seasonable hours.

Work at night, and out-door work in inclement weather, should not be exacted, unless in case of necessity. Servants should not be kept at home on Sunday, unless to take care of the premises, or animals thereupon, or for work of daily necessity, or on unusual occasions; and in such cases, only so many should be kept at home as were necessary for these purposes. Sunday work should be done by the servants in turn, except in cases of sickness or other disability, when it might be assigned to them out of their regular turn. Absentees on Sunday should return to their homes by sun-set.¹²

No person of color should pursue or practice the art, trade or business of an artisan or shop-keeper, or any other trade, employment or business (besides that of husbandry or that of a servant under a contract for service

¹² *Ibid.*, 295-296.

of labor) on his own account and for his own benefit or in partnership with a white person, or as an agent or servant of any white person, until he should have obtained a license therefore from the judge of the District Court, which license should be good for one year only. Upon complaint as to abuse the license could be revoked.^{12a}

Vagrancy and idleness were punished by sentence to hard labor. Vagrants were defined, among other ways, as persons who had not some fixed place of abode and some lawful and reputable employment; those who had not some visible and known means of fair, honest and reputable livelihood; those who, not having sufficient means of support, were able to work and did not work; those who hunted game of any description, or fished on the land of others, or frequented the premises contrary to the will of the occupants. Such offenders might be sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor, one or both as shall be fixed by the verdict, not exceeding twelve months. The defendant if thus sentenced might be hired for such wages as could be obtained for his services to any owner or lessee of a farm, or might be hired for the same labor on the streets, roads or public buildings. The person receiving such a vagrant should have all the rights and remedies for enforcing good conduct and diligence at labor.¹³

If any person should falsely personate any master or employer, and should either personally or in writing give any false, forged or counterfeited character to any person offering himself to be hired as a servant such person so offending should be guilty of a misdemeanor. If any person should knowingly or willfully pretend or falsely assert in writing that any servant had been hired or retained for any period of time whatsoever, or in any station or capacity whatsoever, other than that for which or in which such servant should have been hired or retained, such person so offending should be guilty of a misdemeanor. If any person likewise pretended or falsely asserted in

^{12a} *Ibid.*, 299.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 303-304.

writing that any servant was discharged or left his service at any other time than that at which he was discharged or actually left such service, or that any such servant had not been hired or employed in any person's service contrary to truth, such a person should be guilty of a misdemeanor. If any person having been in service should, by offering to hire himself as a servant in any service whatsoever, falsely or willfully pretend not to have been retained in such service, such a person should be guilty of misdemeanor. Such misdemeanors as thus specified were punishable by a fine not exceeding \$100. If this fine should not be immediately paid, other punishment might be substituted.¹⁴

No person of color should immigrate into and reside in the State, unless within 20 days after his arrival he should enter into a bond with two freeholders as sureties to be approved by the Judge of the District Court or a Magistrate, in a penalty of \$1,000, conditioned for his good behavior and his support, if he should be unable to support himself. If any person thus offending remain in the State more than 15 days after the punishment should have been inflicted, or having left the State should return to the same, he should upon conviction be transported beyond the limits of the State for life, or be kept to hard labor, with occasional solitary confinement, for a period not exceeding 5 years.¹⁵

Whenever under any law sentence imposing a fine was passed, if the fine and the cost should not be immediately paid the convict should be detained and other punishment substituted. If the offense should not involve the *crimen falsi*, and be infamous, the substitution should be, in the case of a white person, imprisonment for a time proportioned to the fine, at the rate of one day for each dollar; and in the case of a person of *color*, enforced labor without unnecessary pain or restraint, for a time proportioned to the fine, at the rate of one day for each dollar. If the offense

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 276.

should be infamous, there should be substituted for a fine for imprisonment, or for both, hard labor, corporal punishment, solitary confinement, and confinement in treadmill or stocks, one or more at the discretion of the judge of the court.¹⁶

In 1866 the General Assembly enacted a measure further defining the jurisdiction of the District Courts. It also passed an act to alter another entitled, "An Act to Amend the Criminal Law." This measure more clearly defined assault without benefit of clergy, burglary, arson, the stealing of farm products, trespass upon the property of a citizen, the selling of stolen goods, misdemeanor and felony, such as irresponsible freedmen might in their free but unattached condition commit at the expense of their former masters. Breach of trust with a fraudulent intention or the hire or the counsel of a person to commit a breach of trust was held larceny. Citizens were thereby given more liberty to arrest the guilty.¹⁷

At the extra session of the General Assembly in September, 1866, however, it was deemed wise to repeal the most rigid provisions of the Black Code to assure the "radicals" in Congress that the State did not intend to reenslave the Negro as was commonly reported from all Southern States. It was, therefore, enacted that all persons known in law in that State as slaves, or as free persons of color, should have the right to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be sued, to be affiants, and give evidence, to inherit, to purchase, lease, sell, hold, convey and assign real and personal property, make wills and testaments, and to have full and equal benefit of the rights of personal security, personal liberty and private property, and of all remedies and proceedings for the enforcement and protection of the same, as white persons then had, and should not be subjected to any other or different punishment, pain or penalty for the commission of any act or offense than such as were prescribed for white persons committing like acts

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1866, 405, 493.

or offenses. It was further provided that all measures relating to persons lately slaves and free persons of color contrary to the provisions of this act, or inconsistent with any of its provisions, should be, and the same were thereby, repealed, provided that nothing therein contained should be construed to repeal so much of the eighth section of a measure entitled "An Act to establish and regulate the domestic relations of persons of color and to amend the law in relation to paupers and vagrancy" as enacted that marriage between a white person and a person of color should be illegal and void.¹⁸

This black code, however, had set forth exactly what the whites had in mind with respect to the status of the Negro. He was to have nominal freedom and at the same time his liberty would be restricted in such way as to reduce him to another form of slavery. The most liberal white persons in the South at that time, and the majority in the North, so far as that is concerned, had never thought of the freedman as occupying a higher position in the social order than that enjoyed by the free Negro prior to the Civil War. The elevation of the Negro to the social and civil status of the white man was considered not only unwise, but an impossibility. His status as a serf, then, should be determined by law and vigorously carried out for the greatest good of the greatest number of whites. With the exception of certain economic and religious privileges accorded the Negro the whites found few rights of the freedman that they should respect.

The Negro from the point of view of the Southern white man was not prepared for freedom and certainly not for free labor. If he had thought that the Negro was actually prepared for such a boon, certainly he would not have gone to war to prevent his emancipation. In freedom, then, the Negro must be attached to some white man who will "control" him by appealing to "law." If he enters a man's service and does not work efficiently he must not be dis-

¹⁸ *Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, Extra Session 1866, 393-394.*

charged to make place for another who may do better, for the second one may be worse than the first. He must be subjected to corporal punishment and forced to work. Subject, then, to the vagrancy laws with all sorts of loopholes for loose construction, almost any Negro might be arrested and condemned as a vagrant and sentenced to work or to undergo any other hardships which the white man might impose. The Negro himself had no redress except that of the tender mercies of the accusers, for the government as established by the Convention of 1865 was to be just as much a white man's government as that which existed in South Carolina prior to the Civil War.

If these measures as then worked out had been honestly executed with a view to doing what the law actually required and no more, less trouble would have followed, but the bottom had dropped out of things in the South. The confederacy had morally collapsed. The liberty to deal with the Negro as an inferior being easily became the license to treat him as a slave. The Negro had had his master to appeal to for protection before the war, but in the absence of civil government in the transition from slavery to freedom he could invoke only the tender mercies of the dominant class. Unfortunately in the majority of the whites there was at that time little high moral sense to which the Negro could appeal for humane consideration as a citizen.

These extreme measures on the part of groups of citizens and of the State government itself together with those in other States, of course, convinced Congress to the effect that the South tended to revitalize slavery. Congress, therefore, decided upon the definite and rigid plan of reconstruction dictated by that body and carried out independently of the president when necessary. The powers of the Freedmen's Bureau were increased by an act of 1866 and passed over the veto of the president. This bill had immediate effect on South Carolina in that it provided for the appointment of a commissioner and twelve assistant commissioners and the detail of an agent for each

county or parish throughout the section where it might operate. The Bureau, moreover, was under the military administration of the president rather than under the civil, granting the president authority to extend the military jurisdiction over all of the officers, agencies and employees of the Bureau. Furthermore, whereas the law of 1865 confined the Bureau to giving aid to refugees and the distribution of abandoned and confiscated lands among them, the new bill vested in the Bureau the power to build schoolhouses and asylums for the freedmen and gave the Bureau far-reaching jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases where equality in civil rights and status, and in the application of penalties, was denied, or the denial thereof attempted on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Under such circumstances, then, there would be left a very small, if any, sphere in which the State government would be permitted to function with respect to the freedmen.

Congress passed over the president's veto, moreover, the civil rights bill. The purpose of this measure was to establish equality in the enjoyment of civil rights for all citizens of the country and to make all persons born in the country and not subject to any foreign jurisdiction citizens. It guaranteed all such citizens the same right in every State and territory in the United States to make and enforce contracts and sue by parties and give evidence to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real and personal property, and to be fully and equally benefited by all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property as were enjoyed by white citizens. Such a measure, as will be readily seen, was in direct conflict with and would actually repeal the black code if enforced in South Carolina.

Congress, then, proceeded to pass and submit to the States the Fourteenth Amendment, the ratification of which the Reconstruction Committee made the condition of the admission of the Senators and Representatives-elect from the rebellious States. Tennessee set the precedent for recon-

struction by ratifying it within a month. This, then, made possible the restoration of government in the Southern States on the basis of universal suffrage without regard to race or color. As so many of the whites were disfranchised because of political disability resulting from participation in the War of the Rebellion and the Negroes were easily in the majority in that State, this placed South Carolina under the rule of Negroes and adventurers from the North, from 1868 to 1876. The program of the Negroes during this period, however, was not restricted to the political drama.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

The freedmen were anxious, too, for substantial gain. They interpreted the victory of the Union forces as meaning a new era for them. Again and again the Negroes asked their friends what good it did them to be free, unless they were to own the land on which they had been working and which they had made productive and valuable. The policy of the United States Government in settling Negroes upon lands abandoned by the planters who fled before the invading army confirmed the belief of the Negroes that such a golden age had come.¹ Acts of forfeiture passed in 1862 swept all the lands in St. Helena parish and thousands of acres on Port Royal Island into the hands of the United States Government. These lands, however, were in the main returned to their owners when pardoned by the Government.^{1a} In some other cases, there followed the splitting up of large plantations; for often a planter hard pressed for funds had to sell one portion of his land to obtain sufficient funds to cultivate the other.²

The reconstructed State government, moreover, endeavored later to obtain land for Negroes. Certain lands which escheated to the commonwealth in default of the payment of taxes made possible another increase in the number of Negro owners. A land commission was early established under the reconstruction regime. Its apparent purpose was to buy up lands and distribute them among the freedmen. An appropriation of \$700,000 was granted for this purpose, but fraud defeated the beneficent aim of the act. Worthless land was purchased and sold

¹ U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, 319, 591, 762, 821, and 1266.

^{1a} Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters from Port Royal*, 316, 319; Laura M. Towne, *Letters and Diary*, 167.

² Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters from Port Royal*, 290-324; and Sir George Campbell, *White and Black*, 153, 350, 351, 352.

at fabulous sums to the Government by commissioners who were generally accused of corruption. When at last an honest commissioner came in, it was discovered that a considerable sum had been stolen.³

Coming thus into the possession of land, the Negro was not anxious to see much immigration into South Carolina. The spirit of the race was strong in him. He was desirous of seeing the lands in the commonwealth in the hands of his own people before the rest of the world's poor were invited to partake. He was inflated with the idea that South Carolina should be in some measure a black man's government and was, therefore, jealous of white immigration.

The system of farming and labor as finally worked out a few years thereafter will throw further light on the situation. In spite of the desire of the Negroes to obtain land, the larger portion of it remained, as was expected, in the hands of the whites. The parcels of land, too, although somewhat diminished in size, still tended to remain larger than many predicted. Not many of the large estates were broken up altogether and sold out to Negroes as was expected. The large majority of Negroes settled down as farm laborers.⁴ They were not idlers; they had been merely seeking a way of escape, although the propensity to idleness in the South was rather strongly developed without being confined to any particular race.

Exactly how efficient they became may be learned from those who saw them in action. The editor of the *Daily News*, who had experienced many misgivings about free labor, conceded its success in this statement published on December 15, 1866: "The experiment of free labor has been tried but a short time, and we would not undertake to speak confidently as to the final result; but notwithstanding much discomfiture and distress and failure, there is much in the

³ *Scribners*, VIII, 154.

⁴ Laura M. Towne, *Letters and Diary*, 166, 171; Mary Ames, *From a New England Woman's Diary*, 19, 44, 98, 118; Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Among the Contrabands*, 228; and C. Jannet, *Les États Unis Contemporains*, 417.

experience of the past year that opens a cheering prospect of the future." . . . "He (the Negro) has begun to understand that freedom does not mean idleness; and hence want as well as the influence of superior sagacity and ability, here contributed as well to his industry as to his good order." This testimony is supported by that of others in various parts of the State.^{4a} Governor Orr said in 1867 that the progress which the Negroes had made during the two years should excite surprise.^{4b}

Robert Somers, traveling in South Carolina in 1871, received the impression that the labor of the Negro as a free man was more efficient than when he was a slave. In proof of this conclusion persons whom he interviewed adduced that many of the Negro women were then almost wholly withdrawn from the field of labor, that the children who were made available under slavery for industrial purposes were being more and more absorbed by the schools, and yet that, with all these diminutions of the labor power, the production of South Carolina and other Cotton States was rapidly rising to a magnitude equal to that of any former time. "Negroes are improving, and many of them rising under freedom into a very comfortable and civilized condition," said he, "is not only admitted in all the upper circles of society, but would strike even a transient wayfarer like myself in the great number of decent coloured men of the labouring class and of happy coloured families that one meets."⁵ "While some portion of the former slaves are probably sinking into an even worse condition than the first, there are others who are clearly rising, both morally and socially. The system of free labour, as was to be expected, will thus, in its own rough but salutary way, sift the chaff from the wheat."⁶

^{4a} *Daily Courier*, May 4, 7, 1866, May 3, Feb. 15, July 30, and Sept. 19, 1867.

^{4b} *Daily News*, May 3, 1867.

⁵ Robert Somers, *Southern States Since the War*, 58-59.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 54-55. See also Sir George Campbell, *Black and White*, 359-360; and George Makepeace Towle, *American Society*, 290.

Interesting testimony is given by Edward King, who visited the State in 1874. He unconsciously gives facts showing that the majority of Negroes had actually readjusted themselves and were developing along independent lines. The undoing of the old relations between the two races and the conferring of political privileges upon such undeveloped persons, he believed, however, worked destruction on the plantations of the fertile lands. The Sea Island cotton crop, once a source of wealth, had decidedly diminished by 1874. The Negroes, however, he did not find altogether idle. While a considerable number of them were devoting their time primarily to fishing and hunting, the Negroes usually planted a little Sea Island cotton on small farms which they had obtained.⁷

Some whites seemed to consider it a bad omen that the Negroes found work in large bands together on the rice plantations distasteful to them and that they were perfectly happy when they succeeded in obtaining an acre or two of land and in erecting a cabin. "To own a mule," said one, "is the acme of bliss."^{7a} When they worked for white people for wages they found that by two or three days' work they could procure money enough to support them in idleness the next week. A South Carolinian hoped that some day labor-saving machinery might be introduced to take the place of this rude and careless Negro element upon the rice plantation, for the Negro men and women whom he saw were certainly of a low and degraded type. There was some doubt, however, that even if labor-saving devices were introduced, the Negroes would be able to use them.⁸

This observer was supported in this view by a South Carolinian in an article contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* in June, 1877. "It is proper to remark, however," said the writer, "that the Negroes are usually rather too un-

⁷ *Scribners*, VIII, 136.

^{7a} *Scribners*, VIII, 138.

⁸ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 679; and George Makepeace Towle, *American Society*, 290-292.

civilized to be trusted with labor-saving machines requiring any delicacy of management. Negro seamstresses always (except a few who were reared and trained in cultivated families) perform coarse sewing, and the washer-women, I might as well remark, badly damage the clothes they work on, iron-rusting them, tearing them, breaking off buttons, and burning them brown; and as for starch!—Colored cooks, too, generally abuse stoves, suffering them to get clogged with soot, and to ‘burn out’ in half the time they ought to last.”⁹

Referring elsewhere to these same Negroes of the lowlands Edward King said: “Some are very industrious.” “There are honorable exceptions to all the general criticisms which may be made upon the character of the lowland Negro: but as a mass the race is really very degraded. It is making gradual progress toward a condition of independence: yet ignorance and irresponsibility are still dense.” He conceded too that even with Negro labor the profits of rice planting were enormous, and he believed that either African or Chinese labor would have to be used, inasmuch as only persons of these two races could sustain the trials of the summer climate.¹⁰ Another said: “There is undoubtedly a great deal of difference among the South Carolina Negroes in intelligence and morality. Among the smaller number of Negroes in the cities, who have always been free, there is a good deal of industry, intelligence and good conduct.”¹¹ A South Carolinian after speaking of the degraded condition of the Negroes said: “All of the above remarks will apply with but few variations to the condition of the sand hill whites, most of whom are inveterate beggars.”¹²

To get a truth of the labor situation, however, we are fortunate in having an official statement on agriculture made in 1883 by the State Board of Agriculture, of which

⁹ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 679.

¹⁰ *Scribners*, VIII, 137, 142.

¹¹ *Letter of a Commercial Correspondent of an Association of Manufacturers*, 1865, 9.

¹² *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 679.

Governor Hugh S. Thompson was chairman and A. P. Butler commissioner. "The Negro in South Carolina," said the report, "is performing a fair share of physical labor, but left to himself he is without initiative and is well content to do little work and to reap small profits. The personal relations between the two races continue most friendly, and perhaps nowhere in the world and at no time in its history has such easy, considerate, kind and respectful intercourse subsisted between employer and employee, as between the Southern white man and the Negro." ¹³

On the Sea Islands, according to this report, field labor was performed almost exclusively by Negroes. Almost all of them were engaged in farming on their own account and a considerable number of them living west of St. Helena Sound owned farms. A still larger number of them, however, rented lands for cultivation, and even the laborers who were in the majority were paid most generally by granting them the use of so many acres of land for stipulated services. The total number of farms in this section of the State was said to be 5,453; but if the enumerators had not returned the lands and crops cultivated by renters as still being that of the land owner, the number probably would have exceeded 6,000. Thus reported, the number of farms was underestimated and their size in some cases overestimated. The largest number of acres of Sea Island planted under one management nowhere exceeded 100 acres. The white planters did not probably average more than 30 acres and this necessitated that they should be landlords of considerable estate. The state of things in this coast region was due to the absence of capital and the low price of land and labor. Lands which were worth \$50 to \$60 during the first quarter of the 19th century and which had increased down to 1860 were selling then at \$10 an acre. They had been purchased

¹³ *South Carolina Resources and Population, Institutions and Industries published by the State Board of Agriculture of South Carolina, 1883, Chapters VII and VIII.*

by Negroes at Government sales in plots varying in size from one to twenty acres. On the mainland coast, also, the Negroes had acquired considerable holdings.¹⁴

In the lower Pine Belt or Savannah region in which were Colleton, Williamsburg, Clarendon and Horry counties, practically the same situation obtained. The planters pursued a system of mixed farming, depending chiefly upon Negroes for labor. White laborers in this section were scarce, with the exception of Horry county, where they were in the majority. In Colleton county the wage system was preferred, although the laborers received "from \$6 a month to \$120 and \$150 a year"; in Williamsburg county wages averaged \$8 a month, and in Horry county \$5 to \$16 a month and \$50 to \$125 a year. In these three counties it seemed that the wage system had proved more satisfactory to the employer and the employee. It enabled the laborer to keep free of debt and proved economical in making his labor more productive by intelligent direction. The condition of the Negro laborers, therefore, was reported as "good." Two per cent of those in Colleton county owned land or the houses in which they lived; five per cent in Clarendon county and twelve per cent in Horry. In the midst of the scarcity of money there was little demand for land, however, although the price ranged as low as from \$2 to \$15 an acre and rental for \$1 to \$3, or for one-fourth to one-third of the crop.

On some of the farms in Colleton and Williamsburg counties and on most of the farms in Clarendon county the share system was preferred to wages. This required that in return for furnishing the land and all supplies the planter should receive one-fourth to one-third of the crop. In this section, however, the planters had been convinced that the share system was not desirable because under it the land deteriorated. Furthermore, the Negroes easily became involved in debt inasmuch as they could not keep accounts and the system of credits induced them to spend more than they would have in the case of cash payments.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

A better idea may be given by the fact that the liens for advances on the growing crops recorded by the clerk of the court for the year 1880, in Clarendon county, numbered 2,716 or one to every farm save nine, and aggregated the sum of \$283,317.18. In Horry, where most of the laborers were white and the wage system was preferred, the liens on the growing crop recorded in the clerk's office that year numbered 27 and aggregated on \$1,179.80.¹⁵

In the Upper Pine Belt a mixed system of farming was also pursued, chiefly with Negroes with an increasing number of whites joining this class, especially east of the Pee Dee where one-third to one-half of the labor was performed by whites. Here was found the evil of liens given against the growing crop. In Barnwell county there were 2,026 averaging \$125, being \$8.80 for each bale of cotton produced. In Orangeburg there were 2,470 liens averaging \$90, being \$9.87 a bale. In Darlington county there were 3,925 liens averaging \$100, being \$16.40 a bale. In Marlboro county there were 1,183 liens averaging \$110, being \$5.40 a bale. These liens were given mostly for provisions, next for fertilizer, and to some extent for mules and farm implements. The number of liens for 1880, moreover, showed an increase over those given for 1879. While this did not indicate a diminution in the amount of supplies raised by farmers, it showed an increase in the number of laborers who were seeking credit to enable them to do business on their own account as tenant farmers. "It is generally experienced that these small tenant farmers, mostly Negroes," said the report, "meet their obligations to the best of their ability; nevertheless, a mortgage given in January or February on a crop not to be planted until April is not taken as a first-class commercial security and consequently the charges on the advances are heavy; for instance, when the cash price of corn is 75 cents the credit price is not infrequently \$1.25 and upward."¹⁶

The general price of the day laborer was 50 cents and

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 82.

food, though it fluctuated from 40 cents to 75 cents. The number of day laborers was augmented by recruits from the increasing class of tenant farmers who supplemented their earnings by hiring out when not busy with their own crops or when pressed for ready cash. Contract laborers in this region were becoming fewer. They received \$10 to \$15 a month and rations in the most progressive communities, whereas in others wages ranged as low as \$6 to \$8. The higher wages were paid in the northeast where most of the laborers were white, and the lowest wages in the southwest where the percentage of Negroes was greatest. Hands hired by the year received from \$90 to \$120 with rations, shelter, firewood, and truck passage. Such laborers, however, had always preferred, when contracting for a year's work, to have some interest in the crop, and this tended to become by far the most general practice; but it became so complicated as to make description impossible.

A widely known system in this region, however, was that practiced by a Negro laborer in Silverton township in 1866. The laborer worked five days in the week for the land owner and had a house, rations, three acres of land, and a mule and plow every other Saturday to work it when necessary and \$16 in money at the end of the year. Some laborers, therefore, proposed to work only four days and later only three days and still less until finally there were various classes of hands working from two to six days in the week, receiving a pro rata share of the crop which varied according to the form of contract made. This peculiar sort of share system was practiced more largely in Barnwell than in Hampton and still more in Darlington and Marlboro.¹⁷

Summarizing this situation, Chancellor Johnson of Marlboro county said: "I have a good many tenants, white and black. I furnish the stock, food for it, pay one-half the blacksmith, fertilizer, bagging and ties account, and furnish ginning facilities; the tenant has his garden and potato patch free, does all the work, from repairing fences and ditches to preparing the crop for market, my advances are

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 82.

repaid and the crop is equally divided. The tenants generally get at the rate of eight to ten bales for each mule they work, grain for their family supplies and enough to make their meat. I get the same amount of cotton and more than grain enough for the next year's crop. I have had some tenants over ten years."¹⁸

In Hampton county, however, the wage system was preferred. There the soil had improved, the condition of the laborers was good and a small number of them owned houses and land. The same situation obtained in Barnwell county, but a larger number of Negroes there owned houses and land. There did not seem to be any preference as to system in Orangeburg and Darlington. In the latter it was reported, however, that the laborers did not work so well nor did they realize so much, but preferred less and to be independent of control. Their condition was reported as "good" and two per cent of them owned houses and land.

In Marlboro and Marion counties both systems were followed with the result that the laborers were considered "satisfactory and were contented and happy." Three to five per cent of them owned houses and land worth from \$10 to \$50 an acre. In Aiken county five per cent of them owned land worth from \$4 to \$5 an acre. From the southwest of Aiken county it is reported that the share system prevailed, the laborer having one-third where he fed himself and one-fourth where he was fed, although this system was not considered satisfactory.¹⁹

The laborers in the Red Hills progressed slowly in the acquisition of land.²⁰ In this they differed from those in the Piedmont region.²¹ Here, a few owned houses and land in Newberry, York and Abbeville counties. Sixteen per cent of the Negroes owned property in Greenville county, while five per cent held title in each of the three counties

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁰ *U. S. Census Reports* (1880), Vol. VI, 520.

²¹ *South Carolina* (1883), 155.

of Spartanburg, Fairfield and Chester. The land value in these counties varied from \$6 to \$25 an acre. It appears, moreover, that the Negroes who owned land in rural communities were on the whole farmers who had also acquired such properties as live stock, agricultural implements, and other farm equipment.

The field work in the Red Hill district was performed mainly by Negroes. A yearly contract hand worked for \$120, shelter, food and fuel. Those engaged by the month were paid from \$8 to \$10; the day laborers, on the other hand, received 50 or 75 cents. The share system prevailed in some parts of Orangeburg county, though the wage system which was coexistent paid in general \$75 a year, \$8 a month or 50 cents a day.²²

The field labor in the Piedmont district was performed chiefly by the natives.²³ The prevailing wages of the field labor here was only \$8 a month or \$100 a year as late as 1883 when some progress toward higher wages had been noted during recent years. In Greenville it was only \$7 a month; in Laurens \$8 to \$12 a month. In portions of Edgefield it was \$75 a year. Although the proportion of Negro farm labor here had not increased in the same ratio as the population of this class, nevertheless, the farm labor of the Piedmont region was drawn largely from Negroes. Some exceptions, however, should be noted. In Spartanburg, for example, two-thirds of the field labor was performed by whites in 1883, although the Negro population usually preponderated. The reports of several of the townships that year, moreover, showed that a considerable amount of other labor in this district was also done by whites, not infrequently a much larger proportion than one would infer from the ratio between the races. These laborers were reported as being healthy, easily managed, working moderately, and living easily. Their condition was reported as "good" in eight localities, as "im-

²² *U. S. Census Reports*, Vol. VI, 520.

²³ *South Carolina* (1883), 155.

proving " in two, and as " poor, but contented and happy " in one.

Although some satisfaction seemed to obtain there was an increasing feeling that the relations of labor and capital had not been properly adjusted. In fact, some students of economic problems regarded such relations as in a transitory stage, believing that those then existing should be perfected or that better ones would be preferred. The main source of dissatisfaction came from the reports of eight out of nine correspondents furnishing statistics to the Department of Agriculture to the effect that under the system in vogue during the reconstruction the Piedmont lands were deteriorating, especially those rented and worked on shares. The ninth correspondent reported that with care the lands improved. Yet in spite of such reports statistics show that within the ten years preceding this report the two leading crops in the Piedmont region had increased, one by 172 and the other by 139 per cent.²⁴

In the Alpine region about one-half of the field laborers were Negroes in 1880, and since attention had been given to cotton culture they were on the increase. They were paid 50 cents a day or from \$6 to \$8 a month with board, or \$75 a year with board. The authorities reported that the condition of the industrious laborers was " good." The number of Negro laborers owning houses and land varied from one to five per cent according to locality.²⁵

The farms were rarely larger than could be worked by 4 horses and the size varied from 150 to 300 acres including woodlands. Here the planters produced the larger portion of farm supplies, although in certain parts they bought these from the West. The system of credits and advances to the smaller farmers prevailed, absorbing with rents not infrequently seven-eighths of the entire crop, as most of the land was rented or worked on shares. The cash rental varied from \$2.50 to \$4.00 an acre. The usual terms were one-fourth of the cotton and one-third of the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 149-150.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

grain; where the stock and implements were furnished by the landlord he received one-half.

The tillage in most parts of the State was rather behind the time. Often the land was not properly drained, adequate fertilizers were not used, the enemies of the crops were not scientifically fought, a satisfactory rotation of crops was not practiced, farming implements were frequently out of date, and there was too much waste in planting and harvesting. Persons from afar and progressive men in the State advocated a more scientific system of agriculture, but conservatism prevailed.

The share system, the basis of the farming then prevailing in most parts, worked out as a handicap to the Negroes. One objection to the share system was that it rendered the laborer indifferent to and reluctant to perform any kind of work on a plantation which does not bear immediately on the corn and cotton crops in which he has a share. A planter who cultivated on the share system saw his fences falling out of order, his manure heaps diminishing and his hogs and cattle strayed, stolen, or starved; or, he would have to resort, after all, to the employment of special hands to do these and other kinds of farm work. The rapid and regular picking of the cotton crop, the greatest difficulty of the planter, was the chief advantage in the share system, but in practical experience it seemed to fail at that point as at others. Rations were consumed in half time, and, an additional supply given, placed the Negro so heavily in debt to his employer by the time the picking season came that he had become all but the peon of his employer and desired to leave.

The Negro, however, was rising in spite of his difficulties. The rather favorable comments from the State Board of Agriculture of South Carolina applied almost altogether to the undeveloped Negroes commonly observed and mentioned as the most degraded condition of the masses of the blacks. Almost invariably, moreover, those who spoke of the degraded condition of the freedmen noted here and there that there were exceptions to the rule.

European travelers and employers in a position to make the comparison sometimes considered the Negro laborer more efficient than the Irish.²⁶ As the situation continued to clear up as the years rolled by during the rapid development of the Negro, travelers gave more space to the progress of the Negro than those who first observed them after emancipation. They could not but be impressed with the appearance and general decorum of the talented tenth with whom they easily came into contact in traveling through cities.

This was decidedly much more the situation in the case of those better circumstanced in other sections of the State. One finds evidence to this effect even in the many such statements²⁷ as the following by a contributor to the *National Recorder* in 1879, when he said: "Again while there are a number of isolated instances in which they have succeeded in amassing property, sometimes to a considerable extent, these are not of sufficiently frequent occurrence materially to alter the general result."²⁸ Such observers evidently expected the freedmen to develop efficiency and thrift immediately, a thing unprecedented in history. When one observes from the United States census records of 1890, however, that 223,496 Negroes were engaged in agriculture, fisheries, and mining, 44,755 in domestic and personal service, 12,198 in manufacturing and mechanical industries, 7,043 in trade and transportation, we must conclude that the Negroes of the State had reached the point of becoming gainfully employed. This thought is further impressed upon the mind in observing that 2,048 Negroes in the State were engaged in professional service.²⁹

For a number of years the Negroes in Charleston had been known to figure conspicuously in mechanical pursuits at which they easily earned a livelihood and accumulated considerable property. Among these may be mentioned the

²⁶ Sir George Campbell, *Black and White*, 35; and William Robertson and W. E. Robertson, *Our American Tour*, 115.

²⁷ *Scribners*, VIII, 137.

²⁸ *Scribners*, Vol. VIII, 129.

²⁹ *Compendium of Census of the United States*, 1890, Part III.

Shrewsberrys, the McKinlays, the Bennetts, the Leslie's, the Birnies, the Wilsons, the Westons, the Gordons, the De-Reefs, the Halls, and the Grants, and a number of persons who attained distinction during the reconstruction period and whose families still enjoy the respect and confidence of both races in that city.

Columbia, the capital, moreover, may also be called an exception, for the Negroes there easily grounded themselves in things economic during the reconstruction regime and lived in conformity to a standard far superior to that of many well-to-do white families of the North. Among the most prominent of these were: Joseph Taylor, William Taylor, Junius S. Mobley, Augustus Cooper and Bishop Clement. William Taylor had such a large grocery business that he had to call in the police on Saturdays to handle the crowd. At Beaufort, where lived the families of Thomas E. Miller and Robert Smalls, the same economic condition of the intelligent Negro obtained.

Negro proprietors of stores constituted, in general, the most affluent of their class in South Carolina. The estimated wealth of the store-keepers was \$40,156,000, in 1880. Approximately fifteen per cent of the population engaged in that occupation and there were altogether 4,645 stores. Of this number, the Negroes owned 49, which were widely distributed throughout the State. There were 25 stores on the Coast operated by Negroes; 5 in the Lower Pine Belt, 16 in the Upper Pine Belt and 3 in the Piedmont region. These stores were the chief trading centers of their communities, carrying general merchandise, miscellaneous foods, dry goods, hardware and liquors. The share of the Negro store proprietors in the estimated wealth of the class has not been ascertained.³⁰

The Negroes were learning to save their money. They manifested great eagerness to deposit some portion of their earnings in the Freedmen's Savings Bank, an institution which was the outcome of the efforts of Northern friends of the freedman to foster in him the habits of thrift and

³⁰ *South Carolina* (1883), 661.

economy. In South Carolina, a branch was opened at Charleston. It encouraged freedmen to save money where-with to purchase homes, farm stock and agricultural imple-ments, while still others accumulated savings as an insur-ance fund against advanced age. At various times the de-posits in the Charleston branch exceeded \$200,000. In Oc-tober 1870, there were 2,790 depositors, with \$165,000 to their credit in this branch. The average deposit was \$60, upon which the rate of interest was five or six per cent. Nine-tenths of the depositors were Negroes.³¹ The bank operated from 1865 until 1874, when the mismanagement of its directors caused its failure.

³¹ Somers, *Southern States Since the War*, pp. 54, 55; Fleming, *The Freedmen's Savings Bank*, *Yale Review*, May and August, 1906, 40, 41, 48, 50.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC PROGRESS

When one reads the various comments on the situation in South Carolina during the reconstruction period he is likely to be misled by the exaggerated statements as to the plight of the people. Destitution had taken the place of abundance and the economic system had been destroyed by the changes of the Civil War. But, according to many of these informers, the whole country continued as a waste land ruined by a new order of things to which the people were ill adapted and from which they could get no relief until those who had been dethroned should be restored to power. Such talk was merely political prate which was decidedly refuted by the gradual economic development of the State out of the chaos of the transition.

Some of the very writers who gave such a dark picture of conditions in South Carolina actually refuted themselves in mentioning also the successful efforts toward amelioration to encourage the immigration of whites. James S. Pike, who fearlessly denounced the corrupt rule of South Carolina, still found the State a most inviting region for enterprising white men looking for such exceptional advantages as large returns from investments in a "fruitful soil," a "salubrious climate," and a "delicious atmosphere." He said: "There seems to be no serious obstacle to a revival of the agriculture of the State on the new basis. The transition is naturally attended by difficulties, but none great enough to conquer ordinary enterprise."¹

Many persons bore similar testimony as to the recuperation of the State. As early as February 20, 1867, the editor of the *Daily News* said: "The present is dark, but we have much to be thankful for, and, although our progress has not been as rapid as in the olden time, yet we have been steadily emerging from our desolate condition into the ful-

¹ Pike, *The Prostrate State*, 102.

ness of former days.” In 1875 Robert Somers said: “Charleston—Old Charleston fondly so called by its citizens, . . . the centre of Carolinian trade and commerce . . . is getting, slowly but surely, on its legs again from the downfall inflicted by the war. Seldom, with a deeper ruin of the old, has there been a more hopeless chaos out of which to construct a new order of things than Charleston presented in those days. Yet the process of amelioration has year by year been going steadily forward. Many of the old merchants of the city and many active agents of exchange, both new and old, have come to put the wheels of trade once more in motion. Some of the old planters have also survived and are seen, though in diminished numbers and with saddened countenances, yet with steady fire of Anglo-Saxon courage in their eyes, attending to affairs like men determined to conquer fortune even in the depths of ruin and on the brink of the grave.”^{1a} Sir George Campbell said of his observations in South Carolina in 1879: “After one has heard so much about the deplorable state of things in South Carolina, I am struck with the good and prosperous appearance of the country towns along the road. Several new railways are in process of construction. . . . In spite of all of their misfortunes and of their constant complaints of want of money, people seem to be recuperating themselves wonderfully.”²

Statistics support these conclusions. The total number of persons engaged in agriculture, in 1880, was 294,602. Of this number 208,672 were males and 85,930 were females. There were also in South Carolina 198,147^{2a} agricultural laborers. These were nearly 100 per cent American, there being but 122 foreigners enumerated among them. The male and female laborers numbered respectively 116,695 and 81,452. It is not known what per cent of the laborers the Negroes constituted. That the proportion exceeded one-

^{1a} Robert Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 37.

² Sir George Campbell, *White and Black, the Outcome of a Visit to the United States*, 327.

^{2a} *U. S. Census Reports* (1880), Vol. on Population, 712, 713, 724.

half, however, is a safe estimate. Nor has the number of Negroes engaged in connection with the phosphate mining industry, the cotton mills,³ as longshoremen or in other occupations been approximately ascertained for either the year 1880 or any year prior thereto under consideration.

The phosphate mining industry obtained the majority of its laborers from the Negroes who lived in the surrounding neighborhoods.^{3a} Many of the Negro farmers in the coast region commended the farm work to their families and obtained employment at the phosphate works as a means of increasing the family income.⁴ Likewise it appears that Negroes virtually monopolized the stevedore work around the wharves in Charleston, Georgetown, and Beaufort. They commanded the field as teamsters and they formed the more intelligent street laborers in the cities of the State. Among the fishermen in the State, also, the Negroes were well represented.⁵ There were, moreover, not a few mechanics, carpenters, and blacksmiths among them.

The wages paid agricultural laborers in South Carolina will be informing. During the years specified the average monthly wage for these workers was as follows:⁶

Year	With Board	Without Board
1866	7.66	12.00
1869	7.34	11.54
1875	8.19	12.84
1879	6.66	10.25

³ August Kohn, *The Cotton Mills of South Carolina* (1907), 24. According to Kohn, "The history of the early efforts of the industry in this State indicated that share labor was very largely used. Experiment has since been made notably in Charleston and in Columbia with colored help, but it has proven a failure, largely because of the lack of ambition on the part of colored people as a race to accumulate money and because of the disposition of the people to work two or three days in a week and rest for the remainder of the period." "Negro men are now employed in odd jobs and as laborers and general utility on the 'yards' and to some extent in the picker rooms. The reason given here for the failure seems not to be conclusive when one considers that white labor in the mills has been equally uncertain as the Negroes are here described to have been."—Copeland, *Cotton Mfg. Industry*, 47, 48.

^{3a} Wright, *The Phosphate Industry of the U. S.*, 83.

⁴ *South Carolina* (1883), 31; Reid, *After the War*, 59.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 609.

⁶ *Report of the Dept. of Agriculture*, 1881-1882, 640.

During the same years the rates of pay for the same type of labor in other States were as follows:⁷

Year	Georgia		New York		Ohio	
	With Board	Without Board	With	Without	With	Without
1866	9.67	15.51	19.32	29.57	18.96	28.46
1869	9.70	14.70	18.64	29.28	16.74	26.35
1875	8.79	14.40	17.80	27.14	16.33	24.05
1879	7.38	10.73	13.19	20.61	13.34	20.72

Although the rate of wages paid in the three states compared is higher than that of South Carolina, due most probably to local causes, there existed the same tendency in each—wage decline as the period advanced toward 1880. A number of causes doubtless contributed to this result. Particularly pertinent, in this connection, however, was the partial revocation of the Specie Resumption Act when on May 31, 1878, Congress declared that the cancellation of the notes should cease at once with \$46,681,000 dollars in notes outstanding over the \$300,000,000 maximum provided for in the Act of 1875. The resumption experiment was, therefore, hazardous and the fact was reflected in a falling off of trade, unfavorable domestic markets and an almost complete stagnation in the country's staple industries.⁸ Such a situation must of necessity depress wages.

During the years 1870 and 1874 respectively the average daily wages paid laborers at other than farm work varied considerably in South Carolina, New York and Pennsylvania. In the former year the rate in South Carolina was \$1.01, in New York \$1.67, in Pennsylvania \$1.65. The respective rates in the latter year were \$1.00, \$1.53, and \$1.40.⁹ The rate in South Carolina is lower than in either of the Northern States and in each of these States a lower rate existed in 1874 than in the earlier year. The panic of 1873 may have conduced to depress the general wage level.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Noyes, *Forty Years of American Finance*, 48-51.

⁹ *Labor in Europe and America*. House Ex. Doc. No. 21, 1st Sess., 44th Cong., 743.

If the people living in the urban communities of South Carolina enjoyed ordinary comforts and happiness, it must be expected that the cost of living for any specified time during the period bore a favorable relation to their incomes. The following table exhibits the cost to consumers of some of the ordinary necessities and makes, at the same time, a comparison of the cost of living in the cities of South Carolina and Virginia.¹⁰

Commodities	Unit	South Carolina			Virginia		
		1867	1869	1874	1867	1869	1874
Corn Meal.....	bbl.	7.08	5.18	6.00	4.20	4.14	3.94
Molasses.....	gal.	1.36	1.22	1.25	1.09	1.01	.90
Potatoes.....	bus.	1.65	1.20	.....	.89	.91	.86
Pork Bacon.....	lb.	.23	.23	.18	.18	.21	.11
Sugar, Brown.....	lb.	.21	.17	.08	.16	.16	.10 $\frac{3}{4}$
Tea.....	lb.	2.00	1.77	1.25	1.56	1.45	1.27
Beans.....	qt.	.08	.08	.15	.09	.10	.08 $\frac{2}{3}$
Cotton flannels.....	yd.	.33	.27	.....	.32	.28	.21
Boots (men's Heavy).....	pair	6.50	5.28	.....	5.47	4.96	4.58
Shirtings (brown).....	yd.	.23	.19	.....	.22	.19	.11
Shirtings (bleached).....	yd.	.26	.25	.....	.26	.23	.13

The table reflects the general higher cost of living in South Carolina than in Virginia as well as the difficulty with which the head might support properly a family of normal size. The general wage level of non-agricultural laborers in South Carolina was low in 1870 and 1874. For the purchase of a barrel of corn meal the wages of one week were required. No doubt, in most cases the wife engaged as a domestic or in other employment, in order to help supply the family's needs. It was commonly understood, moreover, that female domestic servants would supply their own tables from the pantries of their employers. Many Negroes doubtless contrived in this manner to reduce their living expenses.

An appropriate index to the economic progress of the Negro during this period may be ascertained, in some measure, by an examination of the economic resources and activities of the State itself. What, then, was the eco-

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 800.

economic position in which South Carolina now found itself? Had Negro labor been an asset or a liability?

As the wealth of South Carolina has always centered chiefly in her agriculture, an examination in this direction should lead to somewhat definite conclusions on the State's economic position. The most important crop of South Carolina was cotton. In 1860, the State produced 353,412 bales of cotton, the average weight being 477 pounds; ten years thereafter, the yield was accounted 224,000 bales weighing 442 pounds; in 1880, the production had increased to 522,548 bales and the weight was 475 pounds.¹¹ The export of cotton from Charleston, during the years 1865-1880, varied from 108,151 bales in former year to 463,129 in the latter. Furthermore, in six years of the period, respectively 1873-1875, 1877 and 1878-1880, these exports exceeded 400,000 bales.¹²

The rice exports¹³ from Charleston, which varied from 4,119 tierces in 1865 to 54,440 in 1880, indicated an increase in the production of that staple not inconsistent with the increased production of other agricultural commodities. The production and valuation of such crops as Indian corn, wheat, oats, sweet potatoes, increased annually through this period.¹⁴ The number and total valuation of live stock including horses, cows, oxen, mules and swine exhibited an annual increase. There was a progressively increasing acreage brought under cultivation; and while the total farm valuation of 1880 was less than that of 1860, it exceeded that of 1870. The valuation of farms in 1860 was listed at \$139,632,508; in 1870, it had decreased to \$44,808,763; in 1880, it had risen to \$68,677,482, while in 1890 it was \$99,104,600. The valuation of farm machinery displayed a like fluctuation: in 1880 less by 50 per cent than that of 1860, it exceeded the valuation of 1870 by nearly 33 per cent. An increased valuation, moreover, was noted

¹¹ *U. S. Census Reports*, 1880, Vol. VI, 470.

¹² *Year Book, City of Charleston* (1880), 281.

¹³ *Ibid.* (1880), 282.

¹⁴ *Reports, Dep't of Agriculture*, 1865-1880, *U. S. Census Report*, 1890, V, 226.

in 1890. The number of farms also had increased greatly. From 33,171, in 1860, there was an increase to 51,889 in 1870. Ten years later the number was 93,864, while in 1890 it was 115,008. Accompanying this increase in number there was a decrease in their average size. The average farm contained 488 acres in 1860, 233 in 1870, 143 in 1880, and 115 in 1890.¹⁵

These changes came no doubt in response to the demands of the time. The breaking up of large farms by their proprietors and the subsequent sale or lease of such divided properties or parts thereof to poor whites and Negroes, who in turn became proprietors or tenants, account largely for the increase in the number of farms and the decrease of their average size. The lower valuation in 1880 than in 1860 was doubtless a natural result of the disorganization consequent upon the disruption of the former planting system and the partial destruction of the State's wealth. The land, moreover, had suffered exhaustion from the system of cropping formerly pursued and, therefore, required much time wherein to recover its former value. The following tables show the production

Crops	1870	1880	1890	Unit ¹⁶
Cotton.....	224,500	522,548	747,190	Bale
Indian Corn.....	7,614,207	11,767,099	13,770,417	Bushel
Oats.....	613,593	2,715,505	3,019,119	"
Rice.....	32,304,825	52,077,515	30,338,951	Pounds
Sweet Potatoes.....	1,342,165	2,189,622	3,063,040	Bushels
Wheat.....	783,610	962,358	658,351	"

THE AVERAGE CASH VALUE PER ACRE OF CERTAIN PRODUCTS FOR
CERTAIN STATES, 1872

	S. C.	Ala.	Ohio	Kansas ¹⁷
Corn.....	8.93	12.18	14.70	12.12
Wheat.....	12.37	12.41	15.77	14.00
Rye.....	11.90	14.66	8.25	6.16
Oats.....	11.90	12.09	9.45	7.50
Barley.....	40.00	.....	21.34	19.25
Potatoes.....	77.00	96.00	74.80	94.00
Hay.....	29.70	22.20	15.34	5.85

¹⁵ *South Carolina*, Part I, Table IV; *U. S. Census Reports*, 1890, V, 118.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 92-99.

¹⁷ Dep't of Agriculture, 1873, 29.

of leading crops for the three years indicated, and the average cash value per acre of farms for certain states in 1872.

During the period under consideration the State made considerable progress in manufactures. The value of output in 1880 practically doubled that of 1860. As compared with Virginia, however, manufacturing in South Carolina was still in a rudimentary stage. The comparison between these two states significantly depicts South Carolina's position among the manufacturing states when it is understood that Virginia had as yet but little utilized her abundant natural resources for manufacturing purposes. The following statistics tell the whole story:¹⁸

SOUTH CAROLINA

Year	No. of Est.	Capital Investment	Hands Employed	Wages Paid	Cost Mat. Used	Value Product
1860	1,230	\$6,931,756	6,994	\$1,380,027	\$5,198,881	\$8,615,195
1870	1,584	5,400,418	8,141	1,543,715	5,855,736	9,858,981
1880	2,078	11,205,894	15,828	2,836,289	9,885,538	16,738,008
1890	2,382	29,276,261	24,662	6,590,983	18,873,666	31,926,681

VIRGINIA

1860	5,385	26,935,560	36,174	8,544,117	30,840,531	50,652,124
1870	5,933	18,455,400	26,974	5,343,099	23,832,384	38,364,322
1880	5,710	26,968,990	40,184	7,425,261	32,883,933	51,780,992
1890	5,915	63,456,799	59,591	19,644,850	50,148,285	88,363,824

In a comparison with the leading one hundred manufacturing cities in the country in 1880, Charleston, the chief city in South Carolina, was rated 93d from the point of view of the valuation of gross production of manufactures; 86th in the valuation of net product of manufactures; 81st in the number of hands employed; and 88th in the amount of wages paid. The gross product of manufactures was valued at \$2,732,590; the net product at \$1,264,215. There were 2,146 hands employed and the sum of \$639,030 was paid in wages. In 1890, however, the product of Charleston's manufactures was valued at

¹⁸ *U. S. Census Reports*, (1880) Vol. on Manufactures, XIII; (1890) Vol. on Manufacturing Industries, Part I, 69.

\$9,005,421; the materials therein used cost \$4,753,396. 5,504 persons were employed in 566 establishments, and the sum of \$2,326,078 was paid in wages.¹⁹

In the matter of home ownership, moreover, a marked advance had been made. Negroes in South Carolina occupied 135,551 homes of which 63,738 were farm homes. Of the latter 13,075 were owned, while but 1,027 of these were in any wise encumbered. Besides the farm homes, there were owned by this group also 8,026 other homes of which 7,589 were free of mortgages.^{19a}

Of the industries in the State, the cotton mills were by far the most important. They were estimated to have consumed from 90,000 to 100,000 bales of cotton annually; to have disbursed nearly \$1,000,000 in wages; and to have produced nearly 8,000,000 pounds of yarn and 44,000,000 yards of goods each year.²⁰ Besides the cotton manufacturers there existed, in 1880, on a small scale such others as bakers, coopers, makers of boots and shoes, wagons, agricultural implements, fertilizers, and still others less important.²¹

STATISTICS OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY 1860-1880 ²²

Year	No. of Establishments	Spindles Used	Looms	Employees
1860.....	17	30,890	525	891
1870.....	12	34,940	745	1,123
1880.....	14	82,334	1,676	2,018

As late as 1880, the principal mineral phosphate in use in this country was obtained in South Carolina. Deposits existed in a number of rivers that converged about Charleston. Low-grade deposits, not worked at that time, were located at Beaufort. A thriving industry in phosphate mining had developed about 1865. Locally and domestically

¹⁹ *U. S. Census Reports*, (1880) Vol. on Mfgs., XXV; (1890) Mfg., Part II, 8-11.

^{19a} *U. S. Census Reports; Negro Population in the United States*, 1790-1915, 470.

²⁰ *Year Book* (1883), 123. *These estimates are probably too high.*

²¹ *Census Reports* (1880), Vol. on Mfg., Table III, 15-87.

²² *Ibid.*, 542-543.

this product was demanded for use as a fertilizer for the cotton crop, the fruit and vegetable crops of the East,

STATISTICS OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY 1890 ²³

Type of Establishment	No. of Establishments	Amt. Capital Employed	Value of Machinery	No. Employees	Total Wages Paid	Cost Materials Used	Value of Product
Cotton Compressing...	4	\$1,187,000	\$255,000	155	\$51,600	\$11,165	\$124,000
Cotton Ginning...	112	160,580	89,965	514	34,372	16,342	113,011
Cotton Goods.....	34	11,141,833	4,961,009	8,192	1,646,574	6,819,320	9,800,798
Total...	150	\$12,489,413	\$5,305,974	8,861	\$1,732,546	\$6,846,827	\$10,037,809

and the grain crops of the West. From 1868–1880 exportation to foreign markets fluctuated from 208 tons in the former year to 61,375 tons in the latter. During the years 1875–1879 inclusive, the foreign shipments varied from 70,546 to 119,566 tons. The decrease of foreign shipments to 61,375 tons in 1880 may be explained in terms of increased domestic demand which in that year consumed 107,358 tons from South Carolina. The manufacture of phosphate into fertilizer began in Charleston about 1871. Shipments of this product from Charleston and Beaufort increased from 12,000 tons in 1871 to 22,040 tons in 1880.²⁴ In this year the phosphate mining industry was capitalized at \$2,071,300. It employed 3,485 hands, paid wages to the amount of \$490,047 and produced an output of 211,377 tons of the value of \$123,823.²⁵

The export of lumber and naval stores ²⁶ from Charleston constitutes a fairly accurate measure of the production of these commodities within the State. The total export of

²³ *U. S. Census Reports* (1890), Vol. on Mfg., 176–179. There were in South Carolina also two establishments manufacturing cotton ties and one, cotton waste. The statistics of these were not in available form.

²⁴ *U. S. Census Reports* (1880), Mfg., 1007, 1008; *South Carolina* (1883), 97.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1008.

²⁶ *Charleston Year Book* (1880), 283, 284.

naval stores from 1865 to 1880 equalled 2,507,544 barrels, the yearly exports increasing gradually from 32,136 barrels in 1865 to 311,000 in 1880. The 100,000 mark was exceeded first in 1871-1872 when 151,553 barrels were exported. For the same period, the lumber exports from Charleston amounted to 195,572,648 feet. The annual exports fluctuated: they were 8,389,171 feet in 1865-1866; 18,558,652 feet in 1868-1869; 19,568,091 feet in 1873-1874 and 14,560,000 feet in 1880.

The fisheries²⁷ constituted a fairly important industry in South Carolina. In 1880, the State ranked twentieth among all the States of the Union, in this industry. The principal fisheries were located around Charleston where shrimp, blackfish, and other species were caught. A limited fishery existed at Beaufort. Small boats and vessels were used extensively in this industry. Some 1,005 fishermen were employed and products valued at \$212,483 were sold.

Before the war, Charleston had commanded a banking capital of \$13,000,000; in 1870, that capital amounted to \$1,892,000. The State besides Charleston had, prior to the war, a banking capital of \$3,000,000; in 1870, this had dwindled to \$300,000. Under these conditions, the merchants and planters were necessarily handicapped in raising and moving the large crops of exportable produce of the State. The banks, moreover, profiting by the money stringency, were enabled to place loans at a rate of interest varying from 18 to 24 per cent on a class of business that presented little risk. The charges in the country districts were still more exorbitant than those in Charleston.²⁸

Three national banks existed in South Carolina in 1869; by 1875 there were twelve. In 1880, the number had increased by one. In the latter year, moreover, there were four State banks, one savings bank and eight private banks. The known resources of national banks, in 1869, including loans and discounts, real estate, specie, bills of other banks and other investments amounted to \$2,400,316.

²⁷ *South Carolina* (1883), 609.

²⁸ Somers, *The Southern States Since the War* (1870-1871), 45.

Of the total, \$1,481,477 was in loans and \$80,035 in bills of other banks. In 1880, the resources of the 13 national banks including the items herein above stated were \$7,791,310. Loans and discounts accounted for \$4,306,292 of these resources and \$100,342 was in bills of other banks. The four State banks possessed resources of \$2,096,611, having as loans and discounts \$1,131,999 and in bills of other banks the sum of \$146,525. On the other hand, these banks were listed as possessing no specie in hand.²⁹

CIRCULATION FOR SEVERAL YEARS WAS AS FOLLOWS: ³⁰

Years	Issued	Redeemed	Outstanding
1872.....	\$2,229,580	\$53,080	\$2,176,500
1875.....	2,782,400	917,250	1,865,150
1877.....	3,367,185	1,968,835	1,398,350
1878.....	3,580,325	2,230,900	1,349,365

In 1873, the bank circulation was \$2,319,500. The circulation per capita equalled 3.29 per cent, the ratio of circulation to wealth was 1.1 per cent and the ratio of circulation to capital was 68.7 per cent. In this same year the liabilities of all banks exceeded the resources by nearly \$2,000,000.³¹ Throughout the whole period, it appears, furthermore, that the banking capital of the state was not fully adequate to meet its commercial needs.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 662.

³⁰ *U. S. Treasury Reports*, 1865-1880.

³¹ *Treasury Reports, House Ex. Doc. No. 2*, 1st Sess., 43d Cong. (1873-1874), 312.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATIONAL FORCES AT WORK

During these years educational forces closely connected with the economic in the uplift of the Negroes. Reconstruction through education was one of the first efforts made on the Sea Islands, where because of the degraded condition of the freedmen it was considered an experiment. On November 7, 1861, the Union forces captured Hilton Head¹ and some adjacent Sea Islands. This brought about the immediate flight therefrom of numerous masters who abandoned their plantations and deserted some nine thousand slaves. The upheaval therefrom resulting in the absence of any uniform national policy of dealing with refugees and slaves thus abandoned challenged the attention of the entire North. Meanwhile, appeals seeking immediate relief for these destitute slaves were sent broadcast to the North by General W. T. Sherman² and Edward L. Pierce, the latter a functionary of the Treasury Department, then on the grounds to examine abandoned property.

In response to these appeals there sprang up in several Northern communities voluntary organizations known as freedmen's aid societies or relief associations, the basic purpose of each being to alleviate the sufferings of these unfortunate people in whatever way practicable. The more prominent of these societies were organized in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, respectively. On the seventh of February, the Boston Education Commission known later as the New England Freedmen's Aid Society was formed, next came the Freedmen's Relief Association of New York on the twenty-second, while the Port Royal Relief Commis-

¹ The Sea Islands of South Carolina are located between Charleston and Savannah on the Atlantic Seaboard. The group connected with the capture of Hilton Head includes St. Helena, Port Royal, Morgan, Paris and Phillips. They are all known as Port Royal.

² In February, 1862, Sherman issued General Order No. 9, *New York Freedmen's Relief Association, Annual Report, 1866, 5-6.*

sion called later the Pennsylvania Society was organized in Philadelphia on the third of March, 1862. School was opened by Solomon Peck in 1862, and a body of teachers followed soon thereafter. Among these were Barnard K. Lee, Jr., of Boston, Ellen Murray, and that renowned apostle of education, Laura M. Towne, who acting under the instruction of Philadelphia abolitionists founded a school for the freedmen on St. Helena Island. Early accounts of this institution, called the Penn School in honor of the Pennsylvania Society that supported it, indicate the development of a fair degree of organization. By 1865, its classes were grouped as primary, intermediate and higher, each conducted by a teacher in a separate room. The unvarying branches of study were reading, spelling, writing, geography, and arithmetic.³

The progressive character of the instruction at this school was one of its permanent assets. In 1869, E. D. Cheney and L. Crocker, who constituted a committee to inspect the schools supported by the New England Branch of the Freedmen's Union Commission, testified to the worthy character of the work of the Penn School.⁴ "This is the oldest school which has remained under the same teachers," said they, "and it shows the good results of continued instruction." With the end of the war and the turmoil of reconstruction, however, the support formerly given the School by the Pennsylvania Society languished and finally ceased. Miss Towne was, therefore, compelled to struggle more heroically than ever to maintain the school. Only the free expenditure of her own resources together with the efforts of devoted Northern friends rescued from threatened abandonment her cherished work and permitted her to witness its development both as a school and a community center prior to her death in the year 1901.⁵ It had then long

³ *The Nation*, I (1865), 747.

⁴ *Freedmen's Record*, V (1869-1872), 30-31.

⁵ *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne, 1862-1884*, ch. XVIII. Rosa B. Cooley, *Sixty Years of Progress of the Penn Normal, Industrial, and Agricultural School, 1862-1922*.

been known as the Penn Normal, Industrial and Agricultural School.

Another whose work bore fruit among the sea island Negroes was Elizabeth Hyde Botume of Boston. Appointed by the New England Freedmen's Aid Society as a teacher of freed people at Beaufort, S. C.,⁶ she sailed for Port Royal in October, 1864. Miss Botume was located in the midst of the rice fields at the Old Fort Plantation,⁷ which she regarded "a place of historic renown and great beauty." Aside from her continuity of labor in this field, the chief contribution of this missionary was the introduction of industrial training on the islands. She deemed the pressing need⁸ to be a sewing school that her pupils who as plantation laborers had been given little opportunity of this sort might now learn this art. Upon the receipt of necessary apparatus from Northern friends together with the cooperation of General Saxton, Miss Botume soon began work on some contraband goods hitherto stored away. The response of the Negro girls to this new form of instruction was astounding. "Sewing," Miss Botume well said, "had a great fascination for all. They learned readily and soon developed much skill and ingenuity." The boys, too, demanded this new type of training,⁹ to the end that there was formed a class, some of the members of which "did most creditable work."

During Miss Botume's first winter on the islands she was apprised of the generous Whitney family in Belmont desiring to work for one school and one set of people. It was soon arranged, therefore, that her school should become the protégé of this family after which it was promptly called. Church friends and neighbors joined with them soon thereafter and formed a distinct freedmen's aid society to maintain this school. Through the sustained interest and support of this group the work of the school went

⁶ Botume, *First Days Among the Contrabands*, 22.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 64, 65.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 69.

forward progressively and efficiently, leaving its impress upon numerous freedmen and their children.¹⁰

Although the records show that few schools established on the islands prior to 1865 were able to sustain life permanently, most of the schools for the freedmen were founded after hostilities had ceased. Various non-sectarian societies and church groups as well as the American Missionary Society cooperated with the Freedmen's Bureau in establishing and maintaining schools on the Sea Islands and also elsewhere in the State. One of the schools so formed and continued throughout the period was the Mather Industrial School of Beaufort. In 1868 this school was organized by Miss Rachel Crane Mather, of Boston, whose name it has taken. Aided by the Women's American Baptist Home Mission Society, this institution became more strictly an agency of social service than a school. It was the purpose of its founder to gather in children made homeless by the granting of freedom, to the end that they might be instructed in the Bible, the common branches and household duties. Throughout its history the institution did not digress from its original purpose. It was incorporated in 1882. In 1887, moreover, there came to the Mather Industrial School Miss Sarah Owen, of Northampton, who succeeded Mrs. Mather as principal when the latter departed this life.¹¹

Such institutions as these already referred to, and also the schools located elsewhere¹² on the Sea Islands, were among the dominant factors in the elevation of the Negroes of that section not only from illiteracy to literacy, but also in manners and morals. They were besides in no wise less responsible for the admirable improvement in the economic status of this class of people so lately considered the most ignorant and least hopeful freedmen in this country.

Charleston was the next place where the education of the Negroes became a concern after the capture of the city

¹⁰ Botume, *First Days Among the Contrabands*, 99, 100.

¹¹ *Annual Catalogue Mather Industrial School*, 1920.

¹² *Freedmen's Record* (1866), 90.

opened the way for this pioneer work. Colonel Woodford, commander of the Port of Charleston, appointed James Redpath Superintendent of Public Instruction of the city and placed him in possession of all the school buildings, which were formally opened on March 4, 1865. Children of the white and Negro races reported to the same schools, though in separate rooms, with white teachers for the white children, of whom there were some three hundred. The Negro children outnumbered the whites greatly, there being more than twelve hundred such to report. It was no doubt due to the heavy enrollment of the latter that the largest two schools in the city were filled to capacity. Despite the heavy attendance, however, the five schools were well furnished and amply supplied with the classes of books needed. The teachers, moreover, were nearly all from Charleston, twenty-five of the forty-two being Negroes.¹³

A further extension of educational effort in Charleston was soon noted. Seven schools rather than five were soon occupied while the enrollment of students increased from 1,500 to 3,115. Besides, there were then employed eighty-three teachers, seventy-five of whom were natives of Charleston.¹⁴ That these teachers were actuated by either humanitarian motives or pecuniary need must be inferred, for efficiency was the exception rather than the rule. Redpath states in a letter of March 9, 1865 that only two of his teachers were efficient.¹⁵ The principal of the Morris Street School, furthermore, commenting upon his assistants, states that they were from Charleston and, "in Boston, would not be thought competent teachers for any school."¹⁶ The opening of the fall term found the municipal control vested in the former Confederates who promptly reorganized the schools by effecting therein several important changes. Far-reaching in its effect was the discontinuance

¹³ *The Freedmen's Record*, 1865-66, 61. Letter written by Redpath on March 9, 1865.

¹⁴ *National Freedman*, May 1, 1865, 122; *Ibid.*, April 30, 1865, 150. *American Freedman*, May, 1866, 29.

¹⁵ *Freedmen's Record*, 1865-66, 61.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1865-66, 100.

of the coeducation of the races. The Morris Street School, however, was retained for Negro children who thereafter were to be taught by native white instructors. This new situation doubtless gave an impetus to a movement to establish for Negroes permanent schools free of municipal control.

As a step in this direction, there was founded, on October 1, 1865, under the auspices of the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Church, the Avery Normal Institute. This school was organized in the State Normal School Building by F. L. Cardoza, a prominent clergyman, well educated, and respected in the State alike by the whites and Negroes. The following year the school was removed to the Military Hall on Wentworth Street, where it remained until 1868 when it secured its present site.¹⁷ It was at this time that Cardoza, who had been elected the Secretary of State of South Carolina, relinquished the principalship¹⁸ of the school which he had for three years served with signal success. He was an indefatigable worker, who jealously prosecuted his labors. His example had also stimulated the work of his teachers to the end that his school which had been early patronized by the better class of Negroes was because of its efficiency superior to the early schools for these people.¹⁹

The new building to which the school had been moved was erected at a cost of \$25,000, of which amount \$10,000 was donated by the philanthropist Charles Avery, a Wesleyan minister of Pittsburgh, whose name the school bears.²⁰ The new and beautiful surroundings²¹ no doubt contributed to the continued progress of the institution which had, in 1880, a teaching force comprising a principal and eight assistants, three of whom had been trained there. Its course of study, moreover, was readily adapted to meet the

¹⁷ *City of Charleston (S. C.) Year Book* (1880), 125.

¹⁸ Simmons, *Men of Mark*, 429.

¹⁹ *National Freedman* (1866), 8. Beard, *A Crusade of Brotherhood*, 140.

²⁰ *City of Charleston (S. C.) Year Book* (1880), 125.

²¹ *Charleston Daily Courier*, May 8, 1868.

changing conditions.²² The normal course offered in addition to the "common branches" instruction in languages and literature, history, government and economics, mathematics to include geometry, bookkeeping, school management and methods of teaching. Instruction in natural philosophy and physiology, moreover, was provided.²³

Another pioneer institution in Negro education was the Shaw Memorial Institute,²⁴ named in honor of Col. Robert G. Shaw who fell at head of his regiment of Negro troops in the assault on Battery Wagner, Morris Island. Shaw's family deemed a suitable monument to his memory to be a well-appointed school for the education of the freedmen in Charleston. This they provided when the building was erected shortly after the war had ended. For several years the school was sustained by the personal efforts of Mrs. Shaw, substantially supplemented by contributions from Northern sympathizers of Negro education. In 1874, however, the funds thus provided being deemed insufficient, a contract was entered into by the Trustees of the Shaw Monument Fund and the Board of School Commissions of Charleston whereby the school was merged with the common school system of the city. Supported by the tax levies

²² *City of Charleston (S. C.) Year Book*, 1880, 125.

²³ There were enrolled in the school, during the year 1880, 488 pupils of whom nearly one-third were in the normal department. The school had already graduated more than 125 persons, while several thousand had doubtless received instruction there, and many of them were at that time teaching in Charleston and other parts of the State.

A decade later the school had achieved a capacity enrollment. The need of the hour might be briefly summarized in the cry for more room, more seats, and more teachers. In spite of the hard times and stagnation which had depressed the city, parents, at tremendous sacrifices, sought for their children the advantages of this school. A further idea of its significance to the community may be gleaned from Miss Amelia Merriam's report on the school's activities to the effect that there were in Charleston so few schools for Negro children that one thousand of school age were unaccommodated. Of the public schools for Negro children in the city, moreover, there were none of higher grade than to prepare for the lowest normal class at Avery. Upon this school, therefore, was placed the task of instructing a disproportionately large number of Charleston's Negro children. (*American Missionary* (1890), 330; (1891), 182; (1892), 352.)

²⁴ *City of Charleston Year Book* (1880), 122.

of the State and city and given occasional aid by Mrs. Shaw, this institution had a magnificent opportunity to render service in the education of the Negro youth.

The Wallingford Academy was yet another institution which sprang up in Charleston, in 1865. This institution, named in honor of the husband of one whose generous contribution freed the site of encumbrance,²⁵ was organized by Jonathan C. Gibbs, a minister of the Zion Presbyterian Church. Located at first on Calhoun Street, the school was removed, in 1868, to its permanent site and there reorganized by another minister, James H. Bates. In 1880, the teaching force of the institution comprised²⁶ a principal and six assistants, two of whom were graduates thereof. It was by this time divided into departments of which the preparatory was the lower and the academic the higher. The latter course offered substantially the subjects taught at Avery. Thousands of Negroes, it is said, have attended Wallingford Academy and many have carried the results of its training to the innermost parts of the State where Negro children did not have access to schools of its standard.

The privately founded schools, moreover, won early the commendation of those who inspected the school facilities afforded the Negroes in Charleston. In 1870, J. W. Alvord, while on a tour of inspection, spoke highly of the progress then being made in the education of the Charleston Negroes as well as of the general elevation of the whole Negro population there. Of the schools then in operation, he regarded the Avery Institute and the Shaw Memorial as ranking first. The Morris Street School with 800 pupils, in charge of the City Board, was "conducted on the Southern plan; strict in discipline, but with less that cultivates the mind and the heart." It was, however, an honor to the city.²⁷

The mentally undeveloped Negroes of Columbia were the next to receive attention. Prior to the late fall of 1865, no one had made any serious effort to instruct the Negroes

²⁵ *Annual Reports of the Committee on Freedom and of the Freedmen's*

²⁶ *City of Charleston (S. C.) Year Book (1880)*, 126.

²⁷ *Letters from the South Relating to the Condition of Freedmen Addressed to Maj. General O. O. Howard*, 6-8.

in Columbia. On the 6th of November, T. G. Wright, a representative of the New York Society, assisted by three women, however, opened a school in the basement of a Negro church. 243 pupils enrolled, and it was expected that 700 or 800 might do likewise, pending the acquisition of buildings and a staff of teachers.²⁸ Shortly thereafter three other schools were opened, one in the building occupied by General Ely for his office and two in a government building. Throughout the next two years, however, new schools were established from time to time, additional teachers from the North assisted by a few Negro instructors were employed, and a large attendance was with difficulty adjusted to the normally inadequate quarters.

A new day had dawned when, in the fall of 1867, the Howard School was completed. This school erected by the New York Society and the Freedmen's Bureau at the cost of \$10,000 contained ten large classrooms. That it had met a significant community need was attested by its attendance of six hundred noted at the close of the school year. Thorough instruction had been offered in the common branches, moreover, if the examinations merited the praises bestowed thereon by one of the local press. Of this work *The Columbia Phoenix* has said: "We were pleased with the neat appearance and becoming bearing of the scholars—and the proficiency exhibited in the elementary branches was respectable."²⁹ This progressive beginning of the Howard School was indicative of the character of its later work. It met a peculiar need in South Carolina, in that it was until recently the only Negro public school³⁰ in the State offering instruction of high school grade. Its course of study, moreover, was not quite the equivalent of a standard three year high school.

More significant than the founding of the Howard School was the establishment of the Benedict Institute, at

²⁸ *National Freedman* (1865), 314; *Ibid.*, 1866, 139-140.

²⁹ J. W. Alvord, *Report*, Jan. 1, 1868, 27. *American Freedman*, July-August, 1868, 442.

³⁰ This condition obtained until 1915.

Columbia. Through the benefaction of Mrs. Bethsheba A. Benedict of Pawtucket, Rhode Island,³¹ the American Home Missionary Society founded this school in 1870 for the purpose of educating young men of the Baptist faith for the Christian ministry, of preparing competent teachers for service among their less favored fellow-men, and of training its students in the duties of Christian citizenship. More than half of those who responded to this generous opportunity were men and women already past middle age. Some were preachers who came that they might learn to read and write. From the point of view of material whereon to work, therefore, the beginnings of this school were humble indeed; nor was there much choice in the selection of a curriculum.

Early in the history of Benedict a theological department was organized. With the progress of time there came, in addition to the grammar school, a high school, a normal practice school, a school of industrial practice, one of nurse training, and finally, in 1894, a college. In this year the institution was incorporated as Benedict College. Starting with eighty acres of land, sustained largely through the benevolence of Mrs. Benedict and guided by the practical wisdom of men like Timothy Dodge, Lewis Colby, and E. J. Goodspeed, the institution has enjoyed an enviable career.

In 1881, a New England minister, Charles E. Becker, succeeded Dr. Goodspeed as president. Becker's coming to the office marked a new era in the development of the school. During the ten preceding years, Benedict had been of necessity chiefly a grammar school of no high pretensions. Becker added an English course, supplemented shortly by a classical course. In 1883 its student body numbered more than two hundred. Moreover, it had established an industrial department, although it has never sought to subordinate the training of the intellect to that of the hand. Strictly adhering to the principles upon which it was

³¹ *Annual Catalogue of Benedict College, 1922-23; Benedict Bulletin, I, Nos. 3 and 4; Prof. T. G. Bronson, Historical Sketch of Benedict College; and A. C. Osborn, Forty Years, A Review of the Work of Benedict College.*

founded, Benedict has achieved an honorable position among the Southern denominational institutions of the Negro race. Its graduates and former students are usually found among the most respectable of their communities; and of the forceful leaders of Christian thought in the State, Benedict may claim a proportionate share.

Columbia was the site of yet another one of those early factors in Negro education. In December 1880, Allen University³² was established here by Bishop W. F. Dickerson and other ministers under the auspices of African Methodist Episcopal Church. It absorbed, moreover, the Payne Institute which had been founded at Lakesbury in 1870. Particular significance attaches to the establishment of the university in that it marks the first attempt of the Negroes to maintain in the State an institution of higher learning. The university has been controlled and managed by Negroes and its faculty has consisted wholly of Negroes. Much credit for its progressive development must be given to its early presidents, J. C. Waters and J. W. Morris, who at one time studied law at the University of South Carolina.³³ These two men administered the affairs of this school, the former from 1881 to 1885, the latter from 1885 to 1894.

Courses were rapidly expanded to extend from the primary through college grade. A theological department became necessarily an integral part of the institution, but perhaps its most unique subdivision was the department of law from which the first class was graduated in May 1884. Much efficient service was rendered by D. A. Straker,³⁴ who in the capacity of professor of law and dean, became a commanding influence there in the lives of his students. Between 1884 and 1890, fourteen young men received degrees in law; twelve degrees in letters, while the Normal Collegiate department graduated fifty-four³⁵ the majority of whom

³² R. R. Wright, *Encyclopedia of African Methodism*, I, 289.

³³ Simmons, *Men of Mark*, 163.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 746.

³⁵ *Allen University Annual Catalogue*, 1894-95, 3.

consecrated their lives to the uplift of their fellowmen. Among the early graduates who have won distinction in their chosen fields, there may be mentioned Bishop W. D. Chappelle, who was later called to the presidency of the university³⁶ and now serves as president of its board of trustees.

The effort to educate the Negro extended also to Orangeburg immediately after the close of the war. The most significant undertaking here resulted in the purchase of the buildings and grounds of the Orangeburg Female College and the merging therewith of the Training School at Camden as well as the Baker Theological Institute of Charleston in order to establish for Negroes forthwith, if practicable, an institution of college grade. Great credit for the success of this undertaking must be given to T. Willard Lewis and A. Webster, ministers of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. No less responsible for the success of the enterprise was Mr. Lee Claflin and his son, the Governor of Massachusetts, through whose generosity Claflin College was established. In 1869, its charter was obtained from the State Legislature.

From the beginning the institution displayed progressive tendencies. Its doors were opened to all classes of persons in the State. Starting with a president, three assistants and several teachers for the primary department, notable expansion came first in 1872, when federal aid permitted the establishment of the State College of Agriculture and Mechanics Institute as well as the acquisition of an experimental farm of one hundred sixteen acres. In 1877 a normal school was added. In this year, moreover, the Agricultural College, although remaining at Orangeburg, became a branch of the State University. Three years later the Theological Department had developed splendidly while the enrollment of some three hundred students quickened an interest in the classical department, which had not hitherto been well attended. The sustained interest of Governor Claflin, the able guidance of President Edward Cooke and the efficient instruction of a capable faculty

³⁶ *Encyclopaedia of African Methodism*, I, 289.

promoted rapidly the development of the college department of this institution. For a considerable period, moreover, this school together with Allen University performed most of the instruction of college grade offered Negroes in this State.³⁷

During this period of transition and stress there took root, at other points in the State, schools which throughout the period of reconstruction and restoration contributed to the intellectual and moral development of the Negro population. One of these, the Browning Industrial Home and Mather Academy, a home school for girls, was established in 1864, at Camden. The founder, Mrs. Mather, of Boston, later transferred the property to the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the following years, there was founded at Mount Pleasant the Laing Normal and Industrial School, by Cornelia Hancock, of Philadelphia. Ownership of this school was vested in the Pennsylvania Abolition Society and aid came regularly thereto from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends. From 1869 throughout this period, Miss Abbey D. Munro, a Rhode Island Friend, faithfully served this institution as principal. She was one of the benefactors of the freedmen in South Carolina and as such made her school a factor in their development.

In the year 1868, several schools of rather permanent character were established. There was founded at Chester the Brainerd Institute, a school of secondary grade. This institution was owned, controlled and supported by the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church. Another school was founded this year, moreover, by the same board at Mayesville. It was known as the Goodwill Parochial School.

The most important event of the year, in this connection, however, was the founding of the Schofield Normal and

³⁷ *Annual Report of the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1875; 1879, 9-10, 19-21.

Annual Catalogue of Claflin University, 1921-1922. In 1896, the University separated from the State, which established independently a state school for Negroes that year.

Industrial School at Aiken, by Miss Martha Schofield, one of the most unselfish and successful workers for the enlightenment of the Negro. First coming to the coast of South Carolina to escape the rigors of a northern winter, Miss Schofield became engrossingly interested in the plight of the Negro and his multitudinous problems incident to emancipation. In 1868 she came to Aiken and began what was to become her life work. Development and expansion came to her school with every new year. In 1882, at the request of the founder, there was appointed for the school a board of trustees from among the Friends of Pennsylvania. In 1886, the institution was incorporated under the laws of South Carolina. Like the schools of its day, it has been co-educational between the sexes; it has combined moral and industrial training in its curriculum, and it has developed a strong course of normal work which equips the student either for higher intellectual effort or to meet the vicissitudes of life.³⁸

In the following year there was founded at Winnsboro, by the Northern Presbyterian Church, the Fairfield Normal Institute. This institution headed by Willard Richardson, a minister of the Presbyterian faith, began with a faculty of three, a schoolhouse, and several other buildings for the accommodation of boarders. In 1880, the attendance was respectably large. Of those under instruction one hundred pupils were preparing to teach and twenty to enter the ministry. This school like many others of its type has had an excellent opportunity to serve its community.³⁹

In 1872, there was established by the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Church, at Greenwood, the Brewer Normal, Industrial and Agricultural Institute. The school maintained a normal development. It splendidly met a community need. Crowded conditions, however, made themselves felt such that in 1890 this word came out from Greenwood: "For the last month we have

³⁸ Schofield Normal and Industrial School, *Annual Catalogue*, 1921.

³⁹ *South Carolina, Resources and Population, Institutions and Industries* (1883), 628.

had over two hundred and thirty students, and have refused between seventy-five and one hundred applications for admission because there was not one inch of room for them.”⁴⁰

In 1881, there was established at Trenton the Bettis Institute, by Alexander Bettis, a remarkable Baptist minister, who had been formerly a slave. With no small expenditure of effort, Bettis persuaded his brethren that the Negroes themselves should found and support a school in their community. An organization of the local Negro Baptist Churches was effected, through the efforts of which, supplemented by the meager aid of the public school fund, the school has been maintained. During the first nine years of its existence, the Academy was led by two men educated for that specific purpose. The first of these, Hampton Matthias, died early; the second, Alfred W. Nicholson, faithfully carried on the work begun by his predecessor. Under the guidance of the latter, the institution has offered instruction of elementary character, accepted both day and boarding students and adapted its work to the needs of a largely rural community, over which it has exercised a profound influence for good.⁴¹

The same forces that inaugurated the movement to found permanent institutions of learning for the Negroes were largely responsible, as well for the State-wide establishment of elementary schools that followed the termination of the war. As factors in the intellectual development of the Negroes, the latter schools, to which less honor may attach than those heretofore considered, are nevertheless due meritorious consideration. They formed the ground work of the educational structure and rendered valuable service in that they made rudimentary instruction available in practically every community in the State. Some of these places, furthermore, had schools of respectable size.⁴² This was especially true of such towns as Darlington,

⁴⁰ *American Missionary*, 1890, 79.

⁴¹ Nicholson, *Life and Labors of Rev. Alexander Bettis*, 70-80.

⁴² *Freedmen's Record* (1866), paragraph 90, 114. *National Freedmen* (1866), 55.

Sumter, Florence, Georgetown and Lexington, while there was located in Camden⁴³ the largest school without the limits of Charleston.

These elementary schools are of interest, moreover, for the reason that they were sometimes monuments of the freedman's own industry, attestations of his eagerness to learn. Even during their first year of freedom they made strenuous endeavors to secure permanent sites and buildings⁴⁴ for their schools, in that they had already erected five schoolhouses and were in the process of erecting others, "chiefly by means of their own money and labor, and upon land secured to them by legal title." In the next year, moreover, twenty-three schoolhouses in the different localities had been built by the Negroes "aided by the 'Bureau' and northern societies," while the freedmen had contributed for the support of school teachers \$12,250 together with \$5,000 given for schoolhouses.⁴⁵ In Camden and Sumter⁴⁶ the building of schools followed. In Beaufort⁴⁷ as early as 1867, the Negroes had "inaugurated their new building for a free high school, bought and supported entirely by their own exertion."

In another significant way, moreover, the Negroes contributed to their own intellectual advancement. There came with an early group of teachers to Port Royal, Charlotte S. Forten, of Philadelphia, a refined and well-educated woman of color who faithfully labored among the less fortunate of her group. The presence of Miss Forten, together with that of other Northern Negroes such as the Misses Lynch and Hicks and one Mr. Freeman, no doubt, inspired many of their students to follow the noble example of self-sacrifice. From another class known before the war as "free persons of color," moreover, there came an efficient group of teachers. Although prohibited by ante-bellum

⁴³ *Freedmen's Record* (1869-72), 79.

⁴⁴ *U. S. Bureau of Freedmen* (1865-1870), *Report rendered Nov. 1, 1866*, 33.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, *Report rendered Dec. 2, 1867*.

⁴⁶ *Freedmen's Record* (1867), 55-56.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

legislation from acquiring learning within this State, this handicap was in many instances overcome. A notable case is that of F. L. Cardoza whose education completed abroad afforded an excellent preparation for his work as educator and his subsequent activities in politics. Others of this class included Henry L. Shrewsbury who taught at Cheraw. Characterized by Reuben F. Tomlinson a true gentleman, he was a faithful, efficient teacher, a noble ideal for those whom he taught. H. E. Hayne, later the Secretary of State of South Carolina, rendered service at Springsville while John A. Burre, H. B. Da Costa, T. C. Cox and J. H. Halloway⁴⁸ were others of this group who at one time served faithfully as teachers. Prominent among the other earlier educators, moreover, was E. J. Sawyer who came to Bennettsville about 1872 as principal of the Negro graded school. He had obtained a thorough college education; and winning the friendship of many of the dominant class, he rose rapidly to prominence in the town. Sawyer later owned and edited *The Pee Dee Educator*.⁴⁹

In cooperation with members of the white race from the North and liberal-minded Southerners, these Negroes strove to promote the intellectual uplift of the freedmen. Their task was not always an easy one, for the sentiment of the formerly dominant class in the State had early stood almost squarely against the education of the Negroes.⁵⁰ Indeed among the less enlightened whites such a prejudice continued long to persist. There was soon noticeable among the upper classes, however, a tendency toward *laissez-faire*, if not to advance the movement for the rudimentary instruction of the blacks to the end that the task of the educators of the freedmen was made to that extent less difficult.

Education at public expense, however, was not immediately realized. Although Charleston had for some time

⁴⁸ *Freedmen's Record* (1867), 56.

⁴⁹ Thomas, *A History of Marlboro County* (1897), 275, 281.

⁵⁰ *U. S. Bureau of Freedmen* (1865-1870), *Report rendered*. *Freedmen's Record*, Nov. 1, 1866, 13, 33. *Freedmen's Record* (1866), 114, 181. *National Freedmen* (1866), 54. *Charleston Daily Courier*, Sept. 20, 1866.

maintained a system of public schools for white pupils, the State of South Carolina awaited the reconstruction regime to acknowledge its obligation to educate all classes of its citizens. A leading feature of the State constitution framed and adopted in 1868 was an article which provided for universal free education. This provision was far-reaching also in that the co-education of the races in all the public schools, colleges and universities in the State, supported in whole or in part by public funds, was thereby permitted. The compulsory attendance at either a public or private school was to be required of all children, physically and mentally competent, for a period of at least twenty-four months. One or more schools should be kept open for a period of six months in each of the school districts into which the State would be divided. The system was to be supported by an annual legislative levy on the taxable property of the State as well as by a poll tax of one dollar placed on every adult male in the State. Other important features of the provisions related to the composition of the State Board of Education, the conditions under which such functionaries as the State Superintendent of Education and county school commissioners should attain office, the maintenance of the State University, the establishment of a State Normal School and an Agricultural College, and the separation of the church from any control of the school system or its funds.⁵¹

In 1868, at the first election held under this constitution, Justus K. Jillson⁵² was elected State Superintendent of Education and several county school commissioners were chosen. A few months later the General Assembly passed a measure to provide for the temporary organization of the educational department of the State. The improvised system thereby authorized continued in force until there became effective on 16th of February, 1870,⁵³ an act to estab-

⁵¹ *Constitution of the State of South Carolina*, 1868, Article X.

⁵² *Common Schools of South Carolina, 1863-1900. Annual Report Dep't of Interior, Commissioner of Education*, I, 1024-1025.

⁵³ *Laws of South Carolina (1869-1870)*, 339-348.

lish and maintain a system of free common schools. To support and strengthen this act an amendment thereto was passed on the sixth of March, 1871.⁵⁴ The public school laws were now an elaborate system conferring unusual benefits on the people if properly and rigidly executed. It provided for both the organization and administration of the educational forces, and the duties and powers of each functionary thereof were given in detail.

What were the prospects of a happy enforcement of this law? From the outset trouble seemed to forbode. The first report of Superintendent Jillson⁵⁵ rendered prior to the permanent organization of the school system was a recitation of depressing facts. Several of the county commissioners had failed to qualify and others had not reported. The work contemplated in the act of temporary organization had been greatly impeded consequent, no doubt, upon the failure of the Legislature to pass a school law. The commissioners of eighteen counties had declared the co-education of the races to be a practical impossibility while the black parents as well as the white preferred separate schools for their children. Poverty and ignorance also stalked abroad in the land, but everywhere even the poorest desired the education of their children and they often made unbelievable sacrifices to attain it.

The situation had not now changed very much by the time of the additional legislation. There were in the law itself, moreover, several fatal defects. The superintendent was vested with no jurisdiction, supervisory or discretionary power. The county school commissioners like the superintendents were elected by popular vote, and the State school funds were in no respect subject to the control of the superintendent except in their distribution according to law to the school commissioners of the respective counties. A second factor of no mean importance was that in her im-

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* (1870-1871), 574-584.

⁵⁵ *Common Schools of South Carolina, 1863-1900*; and *Annual Report Dept. Interior, Commissioner of Education*, I, 1024-1025.

poverished condition the State gave evidences of no such ability as to maintain such a system; and her Legislature, no doubt, took this into account when it first appropriated only \$50,000. Besides, since no penalty attached to the non-payment of the poll tax, the latter remained generally unpaid. A third, and perhaps most significant consideration, was found in that little or no genuine interest in the success of public free education could be engendered. The former ruling class had refused political cooperation with the Negroes, who, from the point of view of voting power, were now dominant. The former were, moreover, never committed to a system of State-wide free education and they were not now likely to favor any constructive movement that might redound to the credit of the reconstruction government. Besides they were bitterly opposed to the co-education of the races, some even to the education of the Negro. From this source, therefore, there could be expected no real assistance.

The class of whites that cooperated with the Negroes politically, furthermore, did not have the success of the system at heart. At bottom, often selfish and rapacious, having merely the desire to exploit the freedmen, officials of this class often misappropriated school funds. The freedmen, themselves, were not wholly blameless. Through inexperience and ignorance the dupes of designing rascals, the Negro legislators were led to sanction schemes of the despoilers and to that extent contributed to the failure to promote an efficient system of universal free education in South Carolina. To these people, however, must attach the honor of an achievement that the flower of the dominant race had for two hundred years failed to realize.

With the passing of the reconstruction government, Jilison was succeeded by Hugh S. Thompson. Thompson found a considerable foundation upon which to build. The school attendance had been increased from 25,000 to 123,000, several thousand schools had been called into existence and 3,000 teachers, despite the inefficiency of many, were at the

service of the State. A new school law passed in 1878⁵⁶ reorganized the school system. Its provisions that mainly affected the Negroes were two in number. First, the district trustees should take the management and control of all local educational interests of the district, subject to the supervision of the county board of examiners. In the second place, the poll tax should be disbursed in the district where it was collected.

The local management and control of the educational interests of each district as provided by the new law convinced the Negroes that their educational needs would receive a minimum of consideration. Likewise the new methods of disbursing the proceeds of the poll tax dealt severely with the blacks in that the latter frequently failed to pay this tax. They found themselves, therefore, in the unhappy position of being penalized because of their ignorance and poverty.

The record shows that the system of public education in the State when later removed from Negro influence secured to the whites a much larger share of the benefits of the schools maintained at public expense. Although improvements such as the greater efficiency of teachers, longer school terms and an increasing number of schools were gradually provided for both races, the Negroes outside of the larger urban centers possessed most meagre common school facilities. In Charleston, the facilities, though inadequate, were fair; in a few other urban centers they were less efficient. But in the great majority of towns and villages the public schools were little better in quality and length of term than in the rural districts,⁵⁷ where the school term rarely exceeded two and one-third months. Furthermore, as late as 1882, the free graded school, forming the department of secondary instruction, had made but little progress in South Carolina. The Howard High School of

⁵⁶ *An Act to alter and amend the school law of South Carolina* (1878), 3-18.

⁵⁷ *Common School Education in South Carolina, 1863-1900, Annual Reports Dept. Interior, Commissioner of Education* (1904), I, 1038. *South Carolina* (1883), 544.

Columbia was until recently the only such institution in the State offering secondary instruction to Negroes. This as statistics will show proves that practically all Negro high school students and all Negro college students in South Carolina have been and are today educated in private institutions.

With respect to higher education the record of the State has been equally consistent. In 1872 there was established in connection with Claflin College, at Orangeburg, a State College of Agriculture and Mechanics Institute, made possible largely through federal aid. Five years later this institution became a branch of the State University. This school, however, confined itself largely to secondary work. Not until 1896, when the federal support formerly accorded to Claflin was discontinued, was even a State secondary school for Negroes established in South Carolina.

During the reconstruction regime, however, when the fundamental law of the State forbade discrimination because of race in State schools, the Negroes availed themselves of the opportunity to attend the University of South Carolina. On October 7, 1873, Henry E. Hayne, then the Secretary of State of South Carolina, matriculated in the School of Medicine. Shortly thereafter, there entered C. M. Wilder, postmaster at Columbia, Joseph D. Boston, a representative from Newberry, and Lawrence Cain and Paris Simkins, legislators from Edgefield.⁵⁸ These men prosecuted the study of law. The next year, F. L. Cardoza, at the time State Treasurer,⁵⁹ and J. W. Morris,⁶⁰ later an educator of note in South Carolina, entered the law school. G. W. Murray,⁶¹ who subsequently represented the State in Congress, entered the college, and J. J. Durham,⁶² who later became prominent in the development of the church in South Carolina, was a member of the preparatory class of

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁶⁰ Simmons, *Men of Mark*, 163.

⁶¹ *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 711-712.

⁶² Simmons, *Men of Mark*, 878-879.

the university. Moreover, Richard T. Greener,⁶³ the first Negro graduate of Harvard College, won from the State university a degree in law and served there as a professor of Latin and Greek. He rendered also other valuable services in that he catalogued the 30,000 volumes of the university library, and wrote an instructive treatise on the rare books which it contained. In 1877, however, with the accession to power of an administration unfriendly to the co-education of the races, a reorganization of the university resulted in the exclusion therefrom of Negroes as either students or instructors.

Despite the interactions of conflicting factors upon the education of the blacks during this whole transitional period, however, remarkable progress was shown in the upward march of these people from illiteracy to learning and intelligence. With the exception of some of that class of the population known before the war as free colored, together with some blacks on the Sea Islands, there were not many Negroes in the State in 1865 who might be fairly termed literate. The progressive changes that twenty-five years produced may be indicated by the statistics of school attendance as given for selected years. There were in 1870 approximately 18,000 Negroes in attendance at the various schools in the State; in 1875, this number had increased to 63,415. Five years later, there were in attendance 72, 853, which number had in 1882 increased to 80,575. By the year 1890,⁶⁴ however, the figure of 122,556 had been reached. This impressive development was no doubt a response in part to the inadequate expansion of the public school system whose records for the year indicate an attendance of 113,410⁶⁵ and, in part, to the facilities and commendable efforts of the private institutions that labored for the education of the Negro race. This was in some respects also a natural outgrowth of the numerical increase in this class of the population.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 328.

⁶⁴ *South Carolina* (1883), 544. *Abstract of the Eleventh Census of the U. S.* (1890), 227.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 229.

Despite the educational advance of the Negroes in this State from 1865 to 1890, illiteracy in this group was still a serious problem. According to the eleventh census, there were in a total of 470,232 colored persons of ten years and above 301,262 illiterates, while of the 332,174 whites of corresponding ages there were 59,443 illiterates. The distribution of illiterates into the arbitrarily selected age groups of whites and blacks was as follows:⁶⁶

Age Group	White	Colored
10-14	13,157	51,548
15-19	8,135	42,441
20-24	6,461	36,694
25-34	10,517	51,763
Above 34	21,173	118,723

⁶⁶ *U. S. Census Reports*, 1890, Vol. II on Population, 206, 207; 218, 219. The statistics of colored persons include an inconsiderable number of persons not of Negro descent.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

The religious system of the freedmen after the Civil War had to be reconstructed along independent lines, as was the desire of both the whites and blacks. The Negroes of the South had no such establishment under their own control. The reason was that prior to the emancipation, especially during the darkest days of slavery, the religion of the Negro had been brought under strict supervision of the whites to prevent the efforts of the Negro ministers who might inflame the minds of the slaves against their masters. There were independent Negro organizations prior to the Civil War, but these were never allowed to develop in the South. The African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded by Richard Allen in 1816, did extend its work to Charleston through the untiring efforts of Morris Brown. As his parishioners, however, were considered responsible for some of the troubles connected with the proposed Denmark Vesey rising of 1822, they were compelled to suspend operation in South Carolina. Further restrictions incident to the schisms of the forties when the national churches were divided into Northern and Southern jurisdictions made the Negroes almost altogether dependent upon such religious instruction as the whites might condescend to give them as communicants tolerated in the Negro pew or the "court of the Gentiles outside of the temple of Jehovah." Bishop William Capers and his coworkers did succeed in giving religious instruction to a considerable number of the slaves by the memoritor method but the masses were left in a state little different from heathenism.¹

In this undeveloped state the religion of the Negroes did not impress observers favorably. It seemed to them a paroxysm of the affections rather than an intelligent

¹ C. G. Woodson, *History of the Negro Church*, 83-85, 123-130, 158-159.

conviction with a bearing on their daily lives. Their affections were unquestionably lively, but of doubtful depth. Yet, as a traveler observed, "If good passions are shallow, so, too, are bad ones."^{1a} Their faith was a simple and childlike one, a strong belief in the presence and power of God expressed with unusual fervor and enthusiasm. Many of them had strange inward experiences and claimed to enjoy special revelations from God. Conversion from the Negroes' point of view was a thunder-peal followed by a deluge of the spirit and a bursting forth of the sun clearing the sky and filling the world with gladness. Most of their religious exercises partook of this exciting character. However, in the best churches attended by intelligent Negroes these scenes seldom occurred except in modified form.² At the termination of the Civil War, therefore, there was a widespread conviction that the freedmen of South Carolina and the South were suffering from a peculiar need of religious ministrations. In accordance with this view, then, the Christian denominations of the country dispatched missionaries to this field.

The Congregationalists were among the first denominations to send missionaries to South Carolina.^{2a} They worked through the American Missionary Association. In 1865, there were in the State six ministers connected with this national body. These included E. J. Adams³ who with the assistance of F. L. Cardoza organized a church for Negro communicants of Charleston. There came each successive year, moreover, additional missionaries in the employ of the Association, the greater number of whom engaged in educational as well as religious work. Such progress was made by 1868⁴ that the Plymouth Church of Charleston had then nearly two hundred members and a Sunday-School of

^{1a} Whitelaw Reid, *After the War; A Southern Tour*, 130.

² David Macrae, Vol. II, *Americans at Home, Pen and Ink Sketches of American Men, Manners and Institutions*; chapter on Black Christianity.

^{2a} *American Missionary Association Reports* (1864), 16, and (1886), 27.

³ *Ibid.* (1865), 23, 24.

⁴ *Ibid.* (1868), 42.

two hundred seventy-five pupils. In 1875,⁵ also, there was organized at Orangeburg a Congregational Church, which as a result of the competition of the more popular Methodists disappeared by 1890. There was organized late in the same year, however, a church at Greenwood, while the Old Circular Church at Charleston⁶ assumed a new life. The total membership of all the Congregational Churches in South Carolina in 1890 was only 376.⁷

The outstanding contemporaries of the Congregationalists were the Presbyterians. In 1864, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church recommended the adoption of a plan to carry the gospel "to the large number of freedmen who have been emancipated during the present Civil War."⁸ There was appointed, in 1867, subsequent to an announcement of the successful character of the work done by the Charleston⁹ Mission, a special committee to supervise the mission work among freedmen.¹⁰ At the General Assembly of 1869, the Freedmen's Department of the Presbyterian Committee on Home Missions¹¹ reported the establishment of missions at Winnsboro, Chester, Yorkville, Laurens, and Bluffton. The missionaries, it continued, were eagerly welcomed by the freedmen and received no opposition from the whites. It was proposed also to occupy the whole or upper part of South Carolina, everywhere combining the church and the school and associating teachers and preachers.

Subsequent reports of the Committee indicate that this policy of the cooperation of the forces was rigidly adhered to. By making the school a centre around which the church work converged, it was sought to maintain among the people a deep interest in both institutions, to give a

⁵ *Congregational Year Book* (1879), 161.

⁶ *American Missionary Association Reports* (1891), 14.

⁷ *Congregational Year Book* (1890), 320.

⁸ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church* (1864), 467.

⁹ *Ibid.* (1867), 526.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* (1867), 470.

¹¹ *Ibid.* (1868-1869), 319.

practical training to ministerial prospects under the guidance of their instructors and to give the churches more careful attention than could be reasonably expected, were the religious and educational activities separated.¹² Thus by 1870¹³ there had been organized by Samuel Loomis, the minister in charge of Brainerd Institute at Chester, six churches with a membership of two hundred fifty-seven. Eight years later¹⁴ the churches numbered eight and the membership six hundred. Around Fairfield Institute, furthermore, five churches had been organized. Such, indeed, was the case with all of the schools supported in this State by the Presbyterians.

This admirable policy lent itself also to a rapid though effective preparation of the Negro minister as a medium to reach the freedmen. The records show that in 1882¹⁵ there was one ordained Negro minister for every three churches organized by this denomination among the freedmen. Of the missionaries and teachers employed then, furthermore, a vast majority were Negroes. This fact doubtless accounts in part for the generous manner in which the Negroes contributed to the maintenance of their missions, in which respect they are said to have kept pace with their professed piety.¹⁶ The freedmen, the Presbyterians reported, gave unsparingly of their means and labor in the building and maintenance of schools and churches, and thus demonstrated completely their desire to facilitate their own elevation from the viewpoint of education, religion and morality.

While the Presbyterians were performing a noble service among the Negroes in South Carolina, the Episcopalians also made some impression upon them. They had some following among the Negroes resulting from religious instruction prior to the war. In 1868, there were baptized in this faith 38 Negro adults and 148 infants. Seventy-

¹² *Ibid.* (1879), 718.

¹³ *Ibid.*, I (1870), 187-188.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* (1879), 201-2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* (1882), 215.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* (1877), 676-8.

seven Negroes were confirmed in this year and 80 of their families had formed some contact with the Episcopal Church.¹⁷ There was maintained at the same time, moreover, a State Board of Missions for Colored People and Freedmen. There had been founded during the previous year, in Charleston, the Holy Communion Church Institute and the House of Rest for Convalescents, and, in 1883,¹⁸ the St. Mark's Association was established. These Episcopal institutions were headed by A. Toomer Porter of Charleston, who, it appears, exerted influence in the establishment of missions for the Negroes, for whom some of the eighteen existing in 1869 were doubtless provided.¹⁹

Besides the denominations already referred to, the Unitarians also made some efforts to proselyte the Negroes in South Carolina. Having established a mission for whites in Charleston as early as 1865, they professed an anxiety to reach the freedmen to the extent that they actually sought out a Negro to educate for the ministry.²⁰ The Negroes, however, while not prejudiced against this faith, nevertheless failed to embrace it.²¹ This, together with a circumstance that caused the discontinuance of the mission²² in Charleston, as well as the general reluctance at the South to accept Unitarian principles, convinced this denomination of the propriety²³ of a plan whereby it might cooperate with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the behalf of the Negro population of the South. This cooperation took the form of assistance in an educational way whereby the Unitarians provided certain instruction at Wilberforce University in Ohio and established so-called Freedmen's Libraries²⁴ of 45 volumes each at strategic points especially accessible to Negro ministers.

¹⁷ Whittaker's *Churchman's Almanac* (1869), 72.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* (1884), 103.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* (1890), 144.

²⁰ *The American Unitarian Association Journal* (1866), 29.

²¹ *Ibid.* (1867), 251.

²² *Ibid.* (1866), 321.

²³ *Ibid.* (1868), 281, 282.

²⁴ *Ibid.* (1869), 252.

Although the efforts of the denominations already considered were not comprehensive in scope, their concentration of forces made them important as influences in the religious culture, moral elevation and mental development of the Negroes. This is especially true of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. That they were barely successful in proselyting the freedmen, moreover, must be attributed to the more popular appeals made to these people by the Methodists and Baptists whose missionaries were now much more actively engaged among the Negroes.

The Methodists early addressed themselves to the task of evangelizing the Negroes. In 1864, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church²⁵ passed two resolutions which committed that denomination to the Christianization of the freedmen as well as to the alleviation of their distressed condition. It was declared to be the duty of the church to encourage colored pastorates for colored people, and the bishops were authorized to organize colored mission conferences. It was recognized also as the duty of the church to assist in relieving the wants of the freedmen. The associations organized for their welfare, moreover, were endowed and recommended, and Congress was urged to establish a Bureau of Freedmen's Affairs.

Pursuant to the first of these resolutions there was organized by Bishop Baker, in Charleston, on the 2nd of April, 1866, the South Carolina Mission Conference which immediately began to do effective work.²⁶ Besides the organization of the South Carolina Conference, there was formed also, in 1866, the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, an agency whose object was to promote the mental and religious improvement of the freedmen. The records show, furthermore, that the beneficent influence of this society was felt in South Carolina as elsewhere.²⁷ At the same time, however, there was founded

²⁵ *Methodist Almanac* (1865), 49.

²⁶ *Minutes of Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church* (1866), 61.

²⁷ *Methodist Almanac* (1869), 28.

with more specific reference to South Carolina the Baker Theological Institute at Charleston. Under the presidency of T. Willard Lewis this school while performing valuable service in the education of young men for the Christian ministry became in a real sense the early center around which the church work in this State converged. This influence it maintained until 1869, when Claflin University at Orangeburg was established by merging this institution with the training school at Camden.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the progressive character exhibited by the South Carolina Mission Conference in its first year of existence was indicative of the healthy growth by which its subsequent career was characterized. In each successive year there were added other circuits and stations to the end that practically every community in the State soon boasted of a Methodist Episcopal connection. As the work became statewide in extent, furthermore, there came an increase in church membership, a greater number of local preachers, a higher valuation of church property and a wide extension of Sunday-School work. This expansion together with a somewhat similar growth of the work in Florida necessitated early the removal of that State from the jurisdiction of the South Carolina body. The progressive development of the work in this conference, which must attest the influence of the church among the freedmen, may be indicated, in part, by an exhibition of the statistics of its growth as given in these five different years arbitrarily selected:²⁸

Year	Local Preachers	Total Church Membership	No. Churches	No. S. S. Teachers, Pupils and Officers			Value of Church Property
1869 ..	153	20,801	82	131	477	7,400	\$82,025
1874 ..	237	30,676	183	207	626	9,310	121,714
1879 ..	341	31,301	256	278	1,201	14,831	191,225
1885 ..	381	38,645	247	301	1,570	19,257	249,691
1890 ..	469	43,032	340	368	2,156	24,148	353,104

²⁸ *Minutes of Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church* (1870), 8; (1874), 7, 158; (1879), 63, 167; (1885), 104. *Methodist Year Book* (1891), 29.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church renewed activity in South Carolina prior to the termination of the War. It sent out among other missionaries James Lynch, who organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, and James D. S. Hall. These were followed shortly by Bishop Daniel A. Payne, who, pursuant to an act of the General Conference of 1864 calling for the establishment of the church in the South, organized, in Charleston, on the 15th of May, 1865, the South Carolina Conference.²⁹

The organization of this conference provided the necessary impetus for the rapid extension of work throughout the State. Missionaries went from the seaboard to the mountains, preaching and organizing churches. The resultant expansion of this earnest work soon necessitated a division of the State into two conferences. This was accomplished in 1878, when the upper part of the State took the name of the Columbia Conference, while the eastern section retained the designation, the South Carolina Conference. The latter comprised then seventy-two appointments, the former eight-nine.³⁰ There followed in the wake of this division, moreover, further expansion such that, in 1882,³¹ the Columbia Conference alone comprised 23,915 members, 4,858 probationers, 246 local preachers, 198 exhorters, 204 churches and church property valued at \$107,205. Two years later, furthermore, the two conferences together had a Sunday-School membership of 31,541 pupils taught by 1,917 teachers in 543 Sunday Schools.³²

There arose out of the first conference of this denomination in South Carolina several great leaders of the African Methodist Church. The opening session of this conference held in the Zion Presbyterian Church comprised sixteen ministers, including T. G. Steward, who was assigned

²⁹ Wesley J. Gaines, D.D., *African Methodism in the South*, 6, 7; D. A. Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years*, 163; John T. Jenifer, *History of the A. M. E. Church*, 52.

³⁰ R. R. Wright, *Encyclopaedia of African Methodism*, I, 356.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 359.

³² Arnett, *Budget of the A. M. E. Church* (1884), 133.

to Beaufort, James H. A. Johnson who went to Hilton Head, and Richard H. Cain. Steward became a college professor, an influential minister, an historian, and a chaplain in the United States Army with the rank of Captain. Cain, the last mentioned, became a conspicuous figure in the political councils of the State and later represented it in Congress. Cain was assigned to Charleston and while there organized the Emanuel Church³³ the membership of which in 1882 was 4,000. He found the opportunity, moreover, to edit the *Missionary Record*, a newspaper to which the Charleston press often referred in commendatory terms. Here, Cain's vigorous personality, his great energy, his organizing ability and his intellectual endowments constituted him a commanding influence in proselyting thousands for his denomination. These same characteristics were doubtless basically responsible for his election to the bishopric in 1880, after he had left the State of South Carolina.³⁴

Besides Richard H. Cain, there were other noteworthy leaders of this church in South Carolina. Some of these, such as William E. Johnson³⁵ and William M. Thomas,³⁶ combined the duties of State legislators and Christian ministers, while others devoted their energies strictly to religious and educational work. Conspicuous in this latter class was Bishop W. F. Dickerson,³⁷ a Northerner by birth and training, who, elected to the bishopric, in 1880, was assigned to South Carolina. His most noteworthy achievement was the founding of Allen University which he served as president of the board of trustees. Unlike Bishop Dickerson, Moses B. Salter,³⁸ another factor in this church, was a South Carolinian by birth. He was at first connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but joined the African Church upon its establish-

³³ Wayman, *Cyclopaedia of African Methodism* (1816-1882), 35.

³⁴ For his early activities see *Daily Courier*, May 16, 17, 18, 1865.

³⁵ Wayman, *Cyclopaedia of African Methodism*, 89.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 161.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 11; Arnett, *Budget A. M. E. Church* (1882), 37.

³⁸ *A. M. E. Church Review* (1892-93), 114.

ment in the State. His services in Aiken, at the Emanuel Church, at Morris Brown Chapel in Charleston, at Beaufort, and as the presiding elder over both the Aiken and Georgetown districts, brought him forward as one of the really strong men of his denomination. He was later rewarded by a well-merited election to the bishopric. These leaders, Bishop Chappelle, and others who remain unnamed, were largely responsible for the popularization of African Methodism in South Carolina.

On the 24th of March, 1867, there was organized at Lancaster, by Bishop J. J. Clinton, with the assistance of several ministers from a neighboring State, the South Carolina Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. This Conference appears to have experienced a moderate growth. Twenty years after its formation, it had organized about one hundred churches, established the Lancaster High School and developed some ministers who have occupied pulpits in South Carolina and elsewhere in an acceptable manner.³⁹

One among those who wrought well in this State was N. A. Crockett,⁴⁰ a native, who, although having a limited education, touched the lives of many freedmen in Kershaw, Lancaster, York and Fairfield counties. In addition to Crockett, T. H. Lomax, Calvin Pettey and I. C. Clinton, the latter a South Carolinian, rendered commendable service in the State. The character of their work here, especially in the case of Clinton, was, no doubt, in part responsible for their subsequent election to the bishopric.⁴¹

When the war terminated there were 78,000⁴² colored communicants of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The disruption of the former social relations between the Negroes and their late masters was deemed a sufficient cause to organize the colored membership as a separate ecclesiastical body. In accordance with the terms of a

³⁹ J. W. Hood, *One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*, 359-360.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 363-364.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 193, 199, 207-209.

⁴² Phillips, *History of the Colored M. E. Church*.

plan⁴³ agreed upon, therefore, there was organized at Memphis, in 1870, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. At the general conference held in December, 1870,⁴⁴ the recently organized South Carolina Conference was represented by R. Valentine and Richard Moses. The supervision of the State Conference was entrusted to Bishop Vanderhorst.⁴⁵ The development of the church in this State was not rapid, nor did it receive a noteworthy impetus prior to 1886, when a large congregation in Columbia, because of irreconcilable differences between itself and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, severed connection therewith and carried to the Colored Methodists an unusually large membership. This congregation, known later as the Sydney Park Church, led by Samuel B. Wallace, one of the ablest ministers of his day, has stood at the head of the Colored Methodists in South Carolina and has given to that denomination a prestige and influence not hitherto enjoyed in the State of South Carolina.⁴⁶

No serious effort came immediately after the war to effect a separate organization of the white and Negro communicants of the Baptist Church in South Carolina. Being a local democracy, each congregation could work out its own salvation. The instruction of Negro workers needed for organization, however, could not be thus taken care of. Yet until the State convention of 1868, the question of the instruction of Negro ministers was held in abeyance. The committee to which this question was referred rendered at this time an important report. Concerning the importance of training a body of colored ministers,⁴⁷ the committee felt there could be no question. They were not only more acceptable to the people themselves, but they were able to preach at less expense, occupying the position of the native assistants in the foreign missionary field.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 142, 143.

⁴⁷ *American Baptist Year Book* (1868), 87; *Daily Courier*, Aug. 7, 1866.

Should these ministers be uninformed, ignorant of the doctrinal and moral system of the Gospel, and incapable of giving direction to the discipline of the churches, or should they be inspired by the fanatical spirit which ignorance engenders, or alienated from their white brethren "by the arts of designing and malignant men, it was easy to anticipate the effect upon the prosperity and even the peace of the country. The spiritual welfare of the Negroes also would be sacrificed."

The claim of these people upon the consideration of Southern Baptists, they believed, was very strong. They were inclined to the Baptist denomination. They were coming into Baptist churches in large numbers. As far as opportunity was afforded it was deemed necessary to make special provision for the supply of their greatest needs. Yet the Committee regarded the circumstances unfavorable to the institution of any permanent plan for the theological instruction of the Negroes aspiring to the ministry. In the meantime it recommended to the pastors of the State to impart such instruction to these persons as might lie in their power. Lessons on Sunday, or on week-day nights, embracing the fundamental principles of theology, scriptural studies, and information in regard to the preparation and preaching of sermons, even if somewhat superficial, would be of great practical benefit.

In 1872, the South Carolina Baptist Convention reaffirmed its interest in the Negro Baptists in that it declared its "continued readiness to give their colored brethren, whether ministers or laymen, all the religious instruction which is within the power of the members of the convention."⁴⁸ It appears, however, that no significant progress had yet been made in the organization of churches among the freedmen, for the records show that there were in the State, as late as 1874,⁴⁹ only 3,701 members of 42 Negro churches which were administered by 23 ordained ministers. Within the next several years, however, the Bap-

⁴⁸ *American Baptist Year Book* (1873), 55.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* (1876), 69.

tist faith sustained among the freedmen in South Carolina a tremendous expansion, doubtless due, in part, to the separate organization of the Negro Baptists into what was known as the State Convention for Educational Missionary and Sunday-School Work.

In 1877, there was held the first convention of this new body,⁵⁰ an important object of which was declared to be to promote the cause of Christ,⁵¹ especially in South Carolina, by establishing a Theological and Literary Institute for the training of young men for the ministry, and also for the education of their sons and daughters. This body would endeavor to afford aid to such ministerial students as could not otherwise pursue a course of study preparatory to entering the ministry, would appoint missionaries to labor in the destitute places of the State, would assist the feeble churches and Sunday Schools and plant new ones where there is necessity for them, and would conduct such exercises at the annual meetings as would promote the efficiency of the pastors and Sunday-School workers.

Pursuant to the object of the convention missionaries, supported partly by the convention, and in part by the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, were assigned to labor in different sections of the State. That they labored effectively is attested by the records of I. P. Brockenton,⁵² D. M. Pierce,⁵³ J. C. Butler, G. W. Raiford,⁵⁴ and M. W. Gilbert, functionaries whose activities covered the State. Their multitudinous duties comprised the attendance upon church associations, establishing conventional societies, assisting and encouraging the leaders who more intimately reached the masses, organizing churches and Sunday Schools, holding Sunday-School institutes, preach-

⁵⁰ I. P. Brockenton of Darlington, one of the early Baptist Missionaries in the State, was elected president; whilst at the same time E. M. Brawley, a Charleston minister educated at Bucknell University, was chosen secretary. The constitution here framed states the admirable purposes of the organization.

⁵¹ *American Baptist Year Book* (1878), 40.

⁵² *Baptist Home Mission Monthly*, X (1888), 287-289.

⁵³ *American Baptist Home Missionary Society Reports* (1883), 74.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* (1884), 48.

ing sermons, conducting prayer meetings, and visiting families. It is noteworthy that Brockenton whose work converged mainly around Darlington built in that city three magnificent churches, the first of which increased in membership from thirteen in 1866 to thirteen hundred in 1889. The third church was erected at a cost of \$18,000. Regarded by all who knew him as a Christian gentleman, Brockenton was honored by the Negro Baptists throughout the State.

In addition to the promotion of missionary work, the Negro convention was instrumental in securing to Benedict Institute the generous financial support of their communicants in the State.⁵⁵ Besides this direct aid given to the institution, the convention assisted in training young men known as beneficiaries,⁵⁶ whose expenses defrayed wholly or in part, gave the latter the opportunity to prepare for the Christian ministry. The convention afforded the opportunity also for such able men as E. M. Brawley⁵⁷ and J. J. Durham⁵⁸ to exhibit more fully their talents in the interest of the freedmen. To the former must be attributed the chief credit for the extension of Sunday-School work which began to develop about 1875.

The latter as a minister and Secretary of the convention believed poor sanitation and lack of medical attention formed together with ignorance and poverty the index to the freedmen's degraded status. He, therefore, acquired a scientific training in medicine and, thereafter, served his people both as a conservator of health and a messenger of Christ. In view of these significant activities and in the absence of evidence tending to show otherwise, the enormous extension of the Baptist faith among the Negroes in South Carolina must be in the main accounted an

⁵⁵ A most notable achievement, in this connection, furthermore, was the raising of \$1,000 by the freedmen wherewith to furnish Colby Hall, the newly erected dormitory for girls. *American Baptist Year Book* (1888), 62; *American Baptist Home Missionary Society Reports* (1881), 49.

⁵⁶ *American Baptist Year Book* (1879), 40; (1888), 62.

⁵⁷ Simmons, *Men of Mark*, 910.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 880-881.

achievement of the Negro Baptist State Convention. Some indication of this expansion, moreover, may be gleaned from the statistics herewith exhibited:⁵⁹

Year	Churches	Ordained Ministers	Church Membership	No. S. S.	Teachers and Officers	Pupils	Value of Property
1868 ..	15	8	1,303	—	—	—	—
1874 ..	42	23	3,701	—	—	—	—
1875 ..	262	131	44,867	—	—	—	—
1884 ..	563	349	98,532	254	1,283	17,011	\$ 18,600
1886 ..	588	359	100,286	205	1,097	12,823	136,010
1888 ..	670	424	120,604	319	1,501	21,070	241,370

Only persons who were in the midst of the Negroes just after emancipation and beheld their wretched condition as they came out of their long bondage, their ignorance, and moral and physical degradation, could appreciate what had been done for them during a generation. “Could they enter one of these churches, in the pine forests of the Carolinas; where the most ignorant and degraded of them were once to be found, and sit down with them in the house of God, and mark their earnest and decorous manner of worship, and listen to the word of God preached to entire edification by an educated minister who was once a slave,” said one of these workers, “then turn aside into the school-house which stands nearby, and see two hundred dusky children neatly dressed, and hear them answer to questions on their studies, the Scriptures, and the Catechism; then follow them to their humble cabins, which were once mere hovels of filth and wretchedness, and see now the home-like appearance of their lowly abodes—the neat beds, the chairs, the table, and now and then a sewing-machine, and the whole surrounded with a well-tilled ‘patch’ of land, bought and paid for and cultivated by the man who was a slave a few years ago, but now a freeman indeed:—could brethren look on scenes like these, for they are real scenes,

⁵⁹ *American Baptist Year Book* (1870), 88; (1876), 69; (1877), 63; (1884), 83; (1887), 183; (1889), 211.

we are sure they would begin to appreciate to some degree the good work done for the freedmen.”⁶⁰

Despite the dissemination of religious instruction among the freedmen and their zealous professions of the Christian faith, however, they did not immediately divorce from their religious worship some of the practices appertaining to their earlier social status. The holding of extended revivals, the stress placed by them upon the mourners' bench, the singing of weird, untutored songs, the high regard in which they held the magic appeals preceding conversion, were, all of them, viewed as sustaining evidences of the irrational emotional character of the freedman's religion.

From another point of view in this connection, moreover, the blacks were more seriously assailed. There were those who held that the religion of the Negro was in no wise related to his life, and exerted no influence over his moral nature and conduct. The moral and religious life of the freedmen was determined largely by the influences which slavery had exerted upon them. South Carolina was one of the States in which the degradation of slavery reached its lowest degree with the least modification from contact with external civilization. There existed especially among the Sea Islands Negroes a most marked crushing out of the humanizing relations of civilized life. The disintegration of the family life, the almost complete disregard of the marital relation fostered by masters when the male member of a union was deemed to be infertile, and the utter lack of respect for the maternal state, during which the unhappy woman was neither exempted from corporal punishment nor permitted a diminution of her daily tasks—all of these led to an inevitable brutalization of its victims.

No race could immediately purge itself of the effects almost indelibly impressed upon it through years of bondage. Among the Negroes, therefore, both men and women, sexual immorality was by no means unknown; but in a truer sense, if considered in the light of their social heritage, the blacks were not so much immoral as unmoral. As the slave during

⁶⁰ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.*

the days of bondage generally had to seek a new mate every time he was sold to a distant planter, sexual relations tended to become less binding. Mindful of the laxity of the marital relation of former times, many Negro men became much married during the early period of freedom and sometimes to poor white women.

The other vices of the freedmen, moreover, were such as appertained to their former condition. As they were in general allowed to own no property and very often forced to steal from a neighboring master to supplement the scant food given by their owners, they did not easily learn to respect property rights as evidenced by petty thefts. Subjected to despotic rule and liable to arbitrary punishment without recourse, the slave had resorted to subterfuge or direct departure from truth in order to escape corporal punishment. This habit, therefore, was carried over with him into freedom. Gambling and, to some extent, drinking, though a minimum of drunkenness, seem to have been natural concomitants of the other vices of a minority.

If these vices were frequently observed among the most degraded, there were among them many honorable exceptions. Moreover, those who associated closely with the Negroes considered the diffusion of education among them and their adoption of a practical religion to be the leavening influence necessary to elevate them from their unlovely state. Furthermore, it was among the Negroes themselves that social workers had to look for examples of moral worth. There was not much for emulation in the character of the white man brutalized by slavery to the extent that he did not consider it wrong to sustain illicit relations with Negro women and often sold his own blood in such offspring.

Some help in the right direction came in the early regulations to determine the status of the Negro in freedom with respect to domestic relations enacted in 1865. The marriage relation had not been legally established among them, although the union of man and wife was generally regarded by the race as sacred. This law, therefore, established among persons of color the relation of husband and

wife by marriage contract. The relation of parent and child was recognized, polygamy was made an offense, cohabitation was prohibited, the rights of the wife were defined, and the family life of the persons of color was made a concern of the State.

Some observers, however, did not report very much improvement in the situation of the freedmen with respect to morals. Thérèse Yelverton (Viscountess Avonmore), who was more favorable to the Southerner than the Northerner and accepted *in toto* the point of view and theories of the former, found no virtue at all in the Negro when she visited the country in 1865. They were merely an aggregate of shiftless, vile and despicable class with no outlook on the future. Having no knowledge of health and little respect for moral laws, the women neglected their young to the extent that many of them died in infancy while large numbers of these women all but openly practiced infanticide. Edward King did not present a much better picture. Referring to these Negroes he said: "They are tools in the hands of the corrupt; they yield easily to corruption. They lack moral sense, as might have been expected, after a few generations of slavery. They are immoral and irresponsible; emotional and unreliable."⁶¹

The South Carolina Negroes, however, did not make the same impression on all persons who observed their situation at this time. Others who had had daily contact with the freedmen spoke of them in a similar vein. E. P. Breck⁶² who labored among the Negroes at Hilton Head said of them as early as 1864, "They have such a reverence for sacred things, that upon being told when they do wrong they are disobeying a command of God is often a sufficient rebuke." Another missionary said: "In a moral view these people are improving. They are learning the importance of truthfulness and proper regard for the rights of others. Extensive religious revivals are now prevailing among them, and step by step they are rising in the great

⁶¹ *Scribners*, VIII, 138.

⁶² *Freedmen's Record* (1865), 23.

scale of civilization.”^{62a} Further testimony of their honesty is given by a teacher of wide experience among freedmen. “Others,” said this worker, “are specimens of honesty. I know a school of over 200 pupils, on St. Helena Island, wherein it is perfectly safe to drop a penknife, pencil and the lost article whatever it may be would be carried immediately to the teacher by the finder and given to her for the owner.”^{62b}

George Rose, who traveled in the State in 1868, said: “I took some trouble to inquire as to the moral condition of the Negro; and, as usual, heard a good report of the poor.”⁶³ Referring to their moral worth, William Saunders said in 1879: “Many persons think that the presence of the Negro race is an unmixed curse to the American people, and that it tends inevitably to their degradation. But, while I cannot venture to give a definite opinion on such a complicated question, I may say that from my own limited experience I should not have taken such a view. It is obvious that in an industrial sense the Negro is a great convenience. In social character, the worst of the blacks are not worse than the worst of the whites. What their general standard will be after a few years of improved influences we cannot yet tell, but certain it is that some of the qualities conspicuous in the Negro might, with advantage, be grafted on to the American character. So great is the revolution which has taken place in the Southern States, that it is surprising to find the people who have gone through such sufferings and humiliation can display so much energy and good sense as they now manifest, but it is not the only instance in which adversity has borne wholesome fruit.”⁶⁴

^{62a} *National Freedman* (1865), 88.

^{62b} *American Missionary Association Report* (1865), 24.

⁶³ George Rose, *The Great Country*, 172.

⁶⁴ William Saunders, *Through the Light Continent or The United States in 1877-1880*.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONVENTION OF 1868

It was fortunate that the church and the school had been placed in operation early enough to effect at least a little preparation of the Negroes for the important rôle which they were soon called upon to play in the drama of reconstruction. As Congress decided that it was not a part of the prerogative of the President to call such a convention as that held in South Carolina in 1865 to frame the constitution of that year, and as the framers thereof did not recognize the just and equal rights of all before the law, the national legislature under the Reconstruction Acts authorized the assembly of the Convention of 1868.* Inasmuch as universal suffrage was extended to the Negroes, at that time in the majority in the State, when the leaders of the whites constituting the minority were disfranchised by acts of disability, this convention was dominated by the native Negroes and Northerners of both races, who had come into the State as Federal agents and adventurers.

The situation might have been a little different if the native whites in their haughty attitude had not held themselves aloof from the Negroes. When it was known that the States would be reconstructed according to the will of

* Briefly told, President Johnson had taken over Lincoln's reconstruction policy, but in carrying it out he made many blunders which doubtless would have been avoided if he had had the tact of the emancipator. He recognized the governments established by Lincoln in Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas with the cooperation of ten per cent of the citizens known to be loyal to the Union. Johnson next recognized provisional governments in the various rebellious States. In his proclamation authorizing conventions for the reconstruction of these governments it was provided that only loyal persons could participate in the election of delegates to such conventions, and the test of loyalty was established by an oath prescribed in an amnesty proclamation made the same day. Civil or diplomatic officers of the Confederacy, military officers above the rank of colonel, governors of seceded States, and persons who owned taxable property worth more than \$20,000 were excluded from the benefits of this proclamation. All other persons taking the oath requiring among other things a pledge to support all laws and proclamations regarding slavery, might vote. Those excepted might make application to the President for pardon. In fact, the seceded States were merely required to repeal the Ordinance of Secession while declaring it null and void, accept emancipation as a finality, and repudiate the debts contracted in the aid of the Confederacy.

Congress on the basis of universal suffrage, several friends of the Negroes, including Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, encouraged them to choose the benevolent and sympathetic southern whites for their leaders and the Negroes were disposed to act accordingly.¹ Approaching the whites, however, the Negroes were rebuffed by their former masters, who openly denounced the effort as an unclean act with which they would not soil their hands. While there were a few far seeing white persons who considered this a mistake, the majority of the aristocratic group would not cooperate in these first efforts to reorganize the State government. Such aristocrats did not care to vote at the same ballot box with Negroes, they would not take part in the formation of the constitution, and they would not hold offices under it. Southern white men, who cooperated with the Negroes and the adventurers from the North, enjoyed little reputation socially or politically and went into politics in the State for corrupt purposes. In the meantime the Union Republican party rapidly took form and, together with the work already begun by Union soldiers and Federal agents and that later accomplished by the Union League, tended to separate the races still further politically.

The opposing forces sought at first to defeat the call for a convention to frame a constitution and civil government for South Carolina. This could be done provided that a majority of the registered voters of the State should fail to vote in the election to determine whether such a convention should be held. In consequence of this contingency, such representative Democrats as Wade Hampton and B. F. Perry, who had assembled in Columbia with others to determine a course of action, recommended that all those opposed to a convention should refrain from any participation in the election to be held to decide the issue. The election which was held on the nineteenth and twentieth days of November 1867, however, was a victory for reconstruction. It brought out a majority of the registered voters

¹ *Journal of Negro History*, V, 110-111 and VI, 241-247; *News*, July 30, 1867; and *News Courier*, Oct. 3, 1874.

in that 71,087 of the 125,328 eligible registered their will at the polls. A majority of 69,006 favored the convention. 54,241 did not vote.

This convention met in Charleston on January 14, 1868. It was memorable for several reasons. It was the first body of the sort in which the Negro members constituted a majority. It was the first experiment in this country of working out a government based on the cooperation of the two races. It was composed of members who for the next several years would control the destiny of the State. As the Negroes constituted a majority in the State, they had elected from their race a majority of the delegates to the convention.² Their probable conduct was, therefore, the

² List of Delegates elected to the convention, *New York Tribune*, Jan. 3, 1868; *Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of South Carolina*, 1868, 6, 7.

A. G. Mackey, Charleston, President.

C. J. Stolbrand, Secretary.

Abbeville: John A. Hunter and Baily Milford, whites; Hutson J. Lomax, Thomas Williamson, and Nelson Joiner.

Anderson: William Perry and Dr. N. J. Newell, whites; and Samuel Johnson.

Barnwell: Chas. P. Leslie, Niles G. Parker, whites; and James N. Hayne, Julius Mayer, Chas. D. Hayne, and Abram Middleton.

Beaufort: Reuben G. Holmes and Jas. D. Bell, whites; and J. J. Wright, Robert Smalls, W. J. Whipper, Landen S. Langley, and Francis E. Wilder.

Berkeley: Joseph H. Jenks, A. C. Richmond, T. Hurley, and D. H. Chamberlain, whites; and W. H. W. Gray, George Lee, Benj. Byas, Wm. Jervay, and M. F. Becker.

Charleston: Frederic A. Sawyer, C. C. Bowen, A. G. Mackey, and Gilbert Pillsbury, whites; and A. J. Ransier, R. H. Cain, F. L. Cardoza, R. C. DeLarge, and Wm. McKinlay.

Chester: B. Barton, S. Sanders, and P. Alexander.

Chesterfield: R. James Donaldson, white, and H. L. Shrewsbury.

Clarendon: Elias Dickson, white, and William Nelson.

Colleton: John K. Terry, Jesse S. Craig, whites; and W. M. Viney, Wm. M. Thomas, and William Driffler.

Darlington: B. F. Whittemore, white; and Isaac Brockenton, Jordan Lang, and Richard Humbird.

Edgefield: Geo. P. DeMeddis, John Wooley, F. Arnim, whites; and R. B. Elliott, P. R. Rivers, J. Bonum, and D. Harris.

Fairfield: James M. Rutland, white; and H. D. Edwards and H. Jacobs.

Greenville: J. M. Runion and W. B. Johnson, whites; and James M. Allen, Wilson Cooke.

Georgetown: F. F. Miller, H. W. Webb, whites; and Joseph H. Rainey.

object of much interest. Could they understand the economic and political doctrines that Americans had accepted? What attitude would they manifest toward their late oppressors who were no longer politically dominant? The actual conduct of the Negroes alone could answer these questions.

The first important step taken by the convention after some unnecessary opposition was to ask Governor James L. Orr to address that body. The reason for this invitation was that he was at that time regarded by some reconstructionists as sympathetically inclined, and it was thought that he could give that body sound advice as to the condition of the State and the needs of the hour. In response to the invitation he addressed that body on the evening of January 17th. Governor Orr regarded the convention as invested with the sovereign power of the State, and believed that the constitution that it might adopt would be ratified and serve for years to come as the fundamental law of the land. He reminded the delegates, however, that they represented neither the intelligence nor the virtue nor

Horry: Henry W. Jones and Augustus Thompson.

Kershaw: J. K. Jillson, S. G. W. Dill, whites; and John A. Chestnut.

Laurens: Joseph Crews, white; Y. J. P. Owens, Nelson Davis, Harry McDaniels.

Lancaster: Albert Clinton and Charles Jones.

Lexington: Lemuel Boozer and Simeon Corley, whites.

Marion: William Collins, white; H. E. Hayne, Benj. A. Thompson, and J. W. Johnson.

Marlboro: George Jackson, white, and Calvin Stubbs.

Newberry: B. Odell Duncan, Jas. Henderson, whites; and Lee Nance.

Orangeburg: E. W. M. Mackey, white; B. F. Randolph, T. K. Sasportas, W. J. McKinlay, and E. J. Cain.

Pickens: Alexander Boyce, Sr., M. Mauldin, and Dr. L. B. Johnson, whites.

Richland: Thomas J. Robertson, white; C. M. Wilder, W. B. Nash, and S. B. Thompson.

Spartanburg: J. P. F. Camp, John S. Gentry, whites; Coy Wingo and Rice Foster.

Sumter: T. J. Coghlan, F. J. Moses, Jr., whites; Wm. E. Johnston and Samuel Lee.

Union: James H. Goss, white; and Abram Dogan and Samuel Nuckles.

Williamsburg: Chas. M. Olsen, Wm. Darrington, whites; and S. A. Swails.

York: W. E. Rose, Dr. J. C. Neagle, whites; and J. H. White and John W. Mead.

the wealth of the State. He, therefore, counseled them with respect to the course they should take to commend themselves to the whole people of the State. The franchise clause of the constitution, he held, should restrict the exercise of the suffrage as well as that of the right to hold office to those who can read and write or possess such property qualification as the convention might determine. All other disabilities whatsoever should be removed.

Of paramount importance also would be the provision of a liberal homestead law made applicable to all owners of homes so as to protect them from antecedent debts. Orr would have the new constitution abolish imprisonment for debt and adopt an ordinance to provide relief to debtors prior to the war, especially where the consideration was for the purchase of slaves. The education of the whole population, especially of the Negro, he believed, would commend itself to the convention, but he counselled against levying taxes exclusively upon property as a means to sustain an educational system.

The Treasury of the State, the Governor asserted, was empty. The tax bill adopted by the previous legislature had failed by \$300,000 to produce the amount of taxes contemplated. Despite the condition of financial stress then confronting the State, Orr considered of unusual importance some statement that the obligations of the State contracted for other than war purposes should be recognized and reaffirmed. No semblance of repudiating such claims must be tolerated. If the convention would frame a just, wise and liberal constitution, Orr was disposed "to advocate its adoption before all the white as well as the black people of South Carolina."³

The address of Governor Orr bore fruit in that one of the first matters to claim the serious attention of the convention was a measure for relief. B. O. Duncan, a white delegate from Newberry, had already offered a resolution to the effect that Major-General Canby be requested to

³ *Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of South Carolina, 1868, 45-55.*

suspend all executions prior to the 30th June 1865, for the space of three months, or until further measures of relief could be matured by this convention.”⁴ There followed another relief measure offered by R. C. DeLarge and numerous other resolutions to reach this end. Speeches in advocacy thereof consumed no small part of the time of the convention. J. J. Wright and R. H. Cain opposed any such action as it attempted legislation when the work of the convention was to frame a constitution. Cain thought, too, that it was class legislation which would help the rich only. He was in favor of relieving the poor of both races.

F. L. Cardozo reminded the body that the United States Constitution prohibited the enactment of a law impairing the obligation of contracts. He said such measures would merely benefit the former owners of plantations and he would do nothing for that class. He did not believe in the confiscation of property; but, as slavery had gone, the plantation system should go with it. Whipper, however, was inclined to protect the interests of this planter class. He insisted that prejudice and vengeance should be removed from the actions of the convention and each member should conduct himself as a representative of all of the people of South Carolina. There followed various other resolutions for exempting wages and prohibiting the sale of land for debt.

The question shifted more and more to the discussion of “Negro bonds.” C. C. Bowen, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, started a heated debate on the third of February when he reported an ordinance to annul all contracts and liabilities for the purchase of slaves where the money had not been paid. Speaking on this measure, B. O. Duncan was inalterably opposed to the recognition of debts or obligations of any kind for slaves as that would recognize slavery. Duncan was sustained in this view by J. J. Wright who held “that the institution of American slavery never was a legal institution, that it never was so by any act or law. “The persons held as slaves,” said

⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

Wright, "were men in every sense of the definition of man, and decisions rendered by the highest courts in the old world as well as in this country," continued he, "had conclusively proved that there never had been, nor could be property in man." Whenever, therefore, a debt was contracted, the proposed consideration of which was a slave, Wright concluded, there was no consideration received and where there was no consideration the debt was null and void.⁵ While there was some argument to the contrary by L. S. Langley and others, the majority of the delegates agreed that the repudiation of these bonds was absolutely necessary on the ground that it was violative of the fundamental principle of moral law expressed in the Declaration of Independence, violative of the natural and inalienable rights of men to liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

A third important relief measure entertained by the convention was the homestead provision. The committee to which this matter was referred reported on the eighteenth of February a plan to exempt with modifications homesteads of the value of \$2,000 in real estate and \$500 in personal property. In opening the debate upon this question, T. J. Robertson, a white delegate from Richland, declared for a provision that should not exempt any homestead from levy for any just debt existing prior to the passage of this constitution. He opposed any homestead provision giving to a man \$2,500 worth of property which he did not deserve. By the measure contemplated, Robertson maintained, any former Confederate who had staked his all on secession might drive off his plantation the Negroes to whom he was in debt. He would not relieve such a man at the expense of the loyal men of the State.^{5a} From this view of the measure R. C. DeLarge dissented and argued that the removal of its retrospective provision would render it valueless as a homestead act. The provision was not, in his opinion, a class measure. It was proposed to benefit both those who had carried the State

⁵ *Ibid.*, 217-219.

^{5a} *Ibid.*, 452.

into secession as well as the loyal. This, he held, was a proper and just attitude for the convention to take.⁶ Various other views were then expressed. L. S. Langley wanted the measure to protect the wages of the laborer, and he was opposed to its retrospective character. T. K. Sasporthas thought that the exemption to the amount of \$2,500 was too much. Despite the arguments to the effect that such a provision would be unjust to the creditor and the wage-earner, Cardoza and Whipper supported the measure.

B. F. Randolph regarded the homestead provision as a most efficient measure of relief. The independence, comfort and happiness of the people, he believed, could not be secured by impoverishing any class, especially that which owned the soil. Although many might desire to reduce the once wealthy landowners to utter poverty, these people must not be turned out into the highways. Such an action would be inconsistent with sound economy and the purposes of a justly constituted society. Randolph desired, furthermore, to see every man in South Carolina a landholder. He wanted agriculture to be prosperous, and, above all, he desired an immediate reduction in the number of desolated farms that then constituted the eye-sore to the commonwealth. He wanted all men regardless of race to share in this prosperity and to this end, as a matter of sound policy, he felt that "the large landholders should be induced to divide their possessions into small farms and populate them with an industrious community." He was, therefore, opposed to a landed aristocracy. The adoption of this homestead proposal might, in his opinion, reach this end.⁷

The measure as approved rejected all amendments save that of R. B. Elliott which provided that "it shall be the duty of the first legislature that shall assemble after the ratification of this Constitution at its first session, to pass such laws as may be necessary to carry this provision into effect."⁸ As a result of subsequent consideration, how-

⁶ *Ibid.*, 452-453.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 489-490.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 489, 506.

ever, the provision, as finally embodied in the constitution, stipulated that the amount of land exempted was not to exceed \$1,000 in value together with the yearly products of the land. Furthermore, the personal property specified might not exceed \$500, and, in addition, necessary wearing apparel might be exempted.⁹

Although measures of relief had received the prior consideration of the convention, that body regarded the land question to be of vital importance. The freedmen were as yet mainly a landless class to some of whom there was attributed a vague notion that the properties of their former masters might be divided among them. The poor whites were also generally landless. The landholders, therefore, were fearful lest some attempt be made to confiscate their properties. The matter of free land came prominently before the convention in a communication from General R. K. Scott, then the Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina. General Scott urged upon the convention the necessity of making some statement to disabuse the minds of the freedmen that that body had lands at its disposal for distribution. As an evidence of the prevalence of this idea among the Negroes, General Scott submitted as one of the many complaints which had recently reached him a letter from S. Emelius Irving, a planter located at Kensington, Eastern Branch of Cooper River, which stated that in anticipation of what the convention might do in the matter of land distribution the freedmen on Irving's plantation had refused to make contracts for the next season, although they had continued to work.¹⁰

Before this communication had received the consideration of the body, however, two resolutions of this sort concerning the sale of public land had been presented, but in response no doubt to the communication of General Scott, there was offered by Joseph H. Rainey of Georgetown a resolution on land which won the approval of the conven-

⁹ *Ibid.*, 888-889.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

tion. This resolution was "That this Convention do hereby declare to the people of South Carolina, and to the world, that they have no land or lands at their disposal, and in order to disabuse the minds of all persons whatever throughout the State who may be expecting a distribution of land by the Government of the United States through the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, or in any other manner, that no act of confiscation has been passed by the Congress of the United States, and it is the belief of this Convention that there never will be, and that the only manner by which any land can be obtained by the landless will be to purchase it."¹¹

The land question, however, was not easily settled. E. W. M. Mackey wanted lands escheating to the State to be sold thereafter in tracts not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres. W. B. Nash introduced a measure intended to defeat speculation in lands and to break up the large estates with a view to a more uniform and just apportionment of land. R. H. Cain, C. D. Hayne, and A. J. Ransier desired to petition Congress for a loan of \$1,000,000 of the fund of the Freedmen's Bureau to purchase land. If much of the money which it had spent had been used in buying land for the poor, they believed, permanent relief would have followed in South Carolina. Such white delegates as Gordon Pillsbury, C. C. Bowen, and D. H. Chamberlain supported the petition on the grounds that the loyal majority was entitled to relief. The convention finally adopted such a resolution. Working to the same end the convention passed an ordinance directing the General Assembly to provide for a Board of Land Commissioners with authority to buy and sell land to settlers.

The education of the masses was one of the important issues to come before the convention. This was introduced by B. F. Randolph who included in his petition for the continuation of the Freedmen's Bureau until the restoration of civil authority in the State, a provision to establish a Bureau of Education that an efficient system of

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 213.

schools might be provided. Randolph considered the "impoverished condition of the State and the financial difficulties of the people" a barrier to the establishment of a State supported system of common schools.¹² Some of his colleagues did not concur in this opinion, for A. J. Ransier offered shortly thereafter a resolution that the Committee on Education inquire into the expediency of establishing a State system of common schools.¹³ Robert Smalls, moreover, was in even more definite disagreement with Randolph's view. He introduced a resolution that the Committee on the Constitution be directed to report an article providing for a system of free common schools. Smalls desired, furthermore, that the compulsory attendance, at some school, of all children between the ages of seven and fourteen years be required for at least six months in the year.¹⁴ The Committee on Education accordingly reported in the fourth section of the article a provision requiring "the compulsory attendance, at either public or private schools, of all children between the ages of six and sixteen years, not physically or mentally disabled, for a term equivalent to twenty-four months."

B. O. Duncan and R. C. DeLarge objected to the compulsory feature of the section because it was both un-republican and impracticable. The debate became more intense when B. F. Randolph with the support of H. E. Hayne advocated the compulsory feature and endeavored to extend the period of required school attendance from 24 to 30 months.¹⁵ This view was opposed by Benjamin Byas on the ground that compulsory education is inconsistent with republican principles. Man he considered a free moral agent who should be so treated and regarded.¹⁶ R. H. Cain opposed the compulsory feature because he considered it "unwise, impolitic and injudicious."

¹² *Ibid.*, 68.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 685.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 685, 686.

Other delegates like A. J. Ransier and R. B. Elliott defended compulsory education. Ransier contended "that in proportion to the education of the people so is their progress in civilization." He believed that compulsory education should be provided that parents who neglected to educate their children might be compelled to do so. The success of republican government, he believed, depended upon intelligence and education and the progress of the people depended upon the success of republican institutions. Ransier felt certain that difficulty might be encountered in enforcing the measure, but the genius of the legislature should be able to solve that problem.¹⁷ Cardoza argued that the progress of Prussia and her efficiency as noted in war and peace were at bottom based upon her school system and the intelligence of her people. Massachusetts and Prussia were similar in that they boasted high social order. To ignore the example of these countries, because far from South Carolina, was to ignore philosophy and history. He believed that the difficulties of enforcement would not be insurmountable. The use of tact and judgment by the legislature should bring proper results. The question he considered to be broadly thus—"Would you pay the poll tax to educate your children in schools or support them in penitentiaries?" Cardoza concluded by offering an amendment which provided that no compulsory law should be passed until a system of public schools had been thoroughly and completely organized, and facilities afforded to all the inhabitants of the State for the free education of their children.¹⁸ The acceptance of this amendment concluded the discussion of the compulsory education feature.

There arose in connection with the education report a lively discussion on the attachment of a penalty for the failure to pay the poll tax. Replying to the statement that no penalty had been prescribed, R. B. Elliott asserted that every state requiring the payment of a poll tax attached as

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 688, 689.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 705-709.

a penalty for non-payment the deprivation of the right to vote.¹⁹ Such a provision by South Carolina however would be most unfortunate, for many inhabitants of the upper part of the State, having been defrauded of the fruits of their industry, were unable to pay even twenty-five cents, much less than the one dollar required. As a measure of protection to this class of persons Elliott moved to amend the section so that the failure to pay the poll tax should never deprive any person of the right of suffrage.²⁰ Opposition to this was voiced by many delegates including H. E. Hayne who claimed there lived in the State no man too poor to pay the tax. Randolph opposed the proposal because it took from the legislature the most effective way of enforcing payment of the tax,²¹ Wilder for fear that this amendment would defeat the proposed school system, and Langley for the reason that it tied the hands of the legislature.²² J. H. Rainey, while not in favor of disfranchising any citizen of South Carolina, conscientiously believed that any man who could not pay an annual poll tax of one dollar for educational purposes should be regarded as a pauper, not eligible to vote. The body, however, accepted Elliott's amendment.²³

That section of the proposed article on education which permitted the coeducation of the races at schools and other institutions of learning supported by the State led to a heated discussion. Speaking in opposition to the provision, B. O. Duncan declared it inimical to the welfare of the State and the relations between the two races therein domiciled. It would offend the whites, particularly the ignorant of that race, and arouse their prejudices. It would secure to the Negroes alone the benefits of the free common schools, for white parents would not send their children to schools attended by Negroes. Dissenting from the point of view of Duncan, J. J. Wright failed to see the im-

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 712.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 713.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 713.

²² *Ibid.*, 717, 718.

²³ *Ibid.*, 726, 738.

propriety involved in the section which did not in his opinion contemplate mixed schools. The section, as he understood it, provided that all schools, colleges and universities in the State supported by State funds should be open to all classes without regard to race, color or previous condition. This provision did not, therefore, compel whites and Negroes to attend the same schools nor did he believe they would, inasmuch as neither whites nor blacks desired such. Separate schools would doubtless be established. Wright explained, moreover, that Negroes had no desire to force upon the whites what some call social equality; that matter, he asserted, must regulate itself. It was not a proper subject of legislation.²⁴ R. C. DeLarge also considered any attempt to change this section a surrender to the unreasonable prejudices of the persons who had been lately their enemies. He would not sacrifice a principle to gratify them.²⁵ F. L. Cardoza who likewise sustained the point made by DeLarge stated, furthermore, that a most natural way of getting rid of these prejudices would be through the early association of the children of the two races. He had no doubt, however, that separate schools would be formed, since there was nothing in the constitution²⁶ to forbid such a course. The point of view of these Negro delegates was sustained by the convention.

Not even to the establishment of a system of free common schools did the convention direct as much attention as that given to the suffrage qualification embodied in the new constitution. According to the second section of the suffrage clause reported from the Committee on Franchise and Elections, every male citizen of the United States, of the age of twenty-one years and upwards, not laboring under the disabilities named in the constitution, without distinction of race, color, or former condition, who was a resident of the State at the time of the adoption of this constitution, or who would thereafter reside in the State

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 893, 894.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 899-900.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 900-901.

one year, and in the county sixty days next preceding any election, as well as every male inhabitant of foreign birth of the age stated who had completed the same resident requirement as the citizen and also declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, conformably to the naturalization laws of this country, should be given the right to vote for all officers to be elected by the people and on all questions submitted to the voters at any election. It provided, however, that no person, who was at that time or thereafter might be disqualified therefor by the Constitution of the United States, should vote or hold office. There was delegated to the General Assembly, however, the power to remove such disability by a two-thirds vote. Neither should any person kept in any alms house or asylum, or of unsound mind, or confined in any public prison be allowed to vote or hold office. It was further provided that every person coming of age after the year 1875, to be entitled to the privilege of an elector must be able to read and write; but this qualification should not apply to any person prevented by physical disability from complying therewith.²⁷

To this provision F. L. Cardoza was inalterably opposed. Contending that it would require ten to twenty years and the expenditure of millions of dollars to establish a thorough system of common schools in the State, Cardoza considered it ridiculous that the representatives of the class to be principally affected should endorse such a proposal. Every child who was at that time fourteen years of age would, if unable to read and write in 1875, be disqualified as an elector. The incorporation of this provision into the constitution, he would consider fatal to the success of those whom he represented, especially since the majority of such parents would demand the services of their children of fourteen. He desired, therefore, that this requirement be either stricken out altogether or the time extended to 1890.²⁸

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 824, 825.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 825.

R. B. Elliott protested with Cardoza the retention of this provision. Elliott doubted that the education of the masses would come by 1890. He regarded the insertion of this provision a special threat at that class of persons, who had been for two hundred fifty years deprived of an education. It should be regarded, moreover, as an affront to the Congress which had passed the reconstruction acts enfranchising all male citizens of the State. This convention which had met for the purpose of laying down a basis of universal suffrage, he contended, would be recreant to duty should it do any less.²⁹ In regard to the same measure, however, W. J. McKinlay believed that where a system of free public schools was maintained, the best interests of the whole people require of an elector some qualification as reading and writing. He had thought that 1876 was a proper date for such a requirement to begin but at that time felt that the rejection of the capitation tax as a means to support the school system justified a postponement until 1890.³⁰

Concurring in part with Cardoza and Elliott, A. J. Ransier desired that "the section go forth untrammelled by any qualification whatever;" while he disliked to use the words colored or white in any discussion, the present, he felt, compelled him to do so. Ransier had observed that suffrage so long as it referred to white men only was unencumbered with a property or an educational qualification. Since the Negroes were enfranchised, however, proper safeguards demanded both a property and an educational restriction, which must result in depriving a large part of that people of the right to vote. As a matter of self-defence, therefore, those representing blacks must jealously guard the recognition tardily accorded them by Congress to the end that universal manhood suffrage unqualified be maintained.³¹ Nor did R. C. DeLarge let slip this opportunity to speak. He stood on the broad basis of

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 826, 827.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 828.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 829, 830.

universal suffrage nor could he believe that greater danger might accrue therefrom in 1875 than in 1868. Were he in Massachusetts he could support such measures, but in South Carolina such was not his attitude. This was also the prevailing opinion of the convention which struck out the provision by a vote of 107 to 2.³²

The same section was attacked in another important connection. J. J. Wright believed that the provision should protect South Carolina against the possibility of foreigners voting in the State prior to their adjustment to American institutions. Congress, he asserted, has framed the naturalization laws in such a way that foreigners are compelled to remain here five years before becoming voters. This same provision, according to Wright, should be included in the South Carolina Constitution. He was unwilling that foreigners should become citizens with all rights of this status in South Carolina unless they could do so under the laws of the United States. He cited the evils arising from this system as observed in New York, where immigrants were carried from the ships to the polls, allowed to vote and thus influenced elections which they did not understand and in which they had no personal concern. If these immigrants were qualified by intelligence to exercise this function properly, less objection could be raised, but they were in fact usually the lowest strata of the society from which they came. Hence, it was but proper and just to require that they cultivate social relations with the people of the State for a period of at least three years before they should be permitted to vote.³³

This objection to the early enfranchisement of foreigners was more favorably received than the somewhat revolutionary proposal of W. J. Whipper. Whipper desired to amend the suffrage clause to the end that every citizen of the United States residing in South Carolina should be enfranchised in that State. He believed in universal suffrage, yet he doubted that the convention would show itself

³² *Ibid.*, 835.

³³ *Ibid.*, 837-838.

so liberal and progressive as to adopt woman suffrage. Whipper was convinced of the superiority of women. Large numbers of that sex, he asserted, had exhibited greater intelligence than his own sex, and he considered it unjust, contemptible and wrong to deprive these intelligent beings of the privileges that were common to men. Governments laid on insecure foundations would never become permanent until women were recognized as the political equals of men. From this issue Whipper believed there was no escape; it would continue to be agitated until it must ultimately triumph.³⁴

In connection with the question of suffrage there arose also that of the removal of disabilities. R. C. DeLarge offered a resolution that this convention petition Congress to remove all political disabilities from the citizens of this State.³⁵ An effort was made to get rid of the measure by postponement. F. L. Cardoza, however, trusted that the motion would not prevail that the convention might exercise that magnanimity and generosity which becomes every citizen of South Carolina. He considered it a matter of expediency as well as of policy to act with generosity in this matter, because it would demonstrate the ability of those who had been deprived of all means of education and learning, to rise above all selfishness and exhibit a Christian universality of spirit.³⁶ J. J. Wright also desired a full and frank discussion, for he was willing to show a Christian spirit wherever there existed a proper evidence of repentance.³⁷ L. S. Langley, however, deplored the bringing of such an important matter before the convention at that time when the delegates were preparing to return home.³⁸

W. B. Nash considered the removal of political disabilities one of the most important questions which had come before the convention. He gave it his unqualified support

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 838.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 877.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 878.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 878.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 879.

and claimed to have been among the first men in South Carolina to sponsor the removal of disabilities.³⁹ Rainey felt that the convention might well afford to exhibit a spirit of magnanimity in a matter of such commanding importance. Herein he differed from S. G. W. Dill who considered it unsound policy to put into the hands of an enemy such a substantial weapon.⁴⁰ The body sustained Whipper's motion, however, as a result of which DeLarge reported a new resolution that the convention request Congress to remove the political disabilities of such citizens of the State as should petition for the same after the adoption of the constitution framed by this convention. Such persons were required to make oath to support the constitutions of the State and of the United States, the said oath to be first deposited in the office of the secretary of state and a copy of the same forwarded with the petition to Congress.

Certain sections of the report of the Committee on Finance and Taxation also elicited extended discussion. That section requiring the aggregate public debt which the State might contract never to exceed \$500,000 beyond the debt already incurred was attacked. J. D. Bell, a white delegate from Beaufort, sought to amend the section so as to increase the aggregate debt permissible. This proposal was opposed by Niles G. Parker and F. L. Cardoza who considered adequate the sum suggested. L. S. Langley dissented from this view, as did R. C. DeLarge who submitted a motion that \$1,000,000 be inserted instead of \$500,000. To the support of Bell, there came also B. F. Randolph who opposed tying the hands of the legislature. A. J. Ransier contended, furthermore, that the crippled condition of the State's trade and commerce offered the best reason to grant to the legislature the widest latitude wherein to operate for the benefit of the State. The amendment offered by Bell was agreed to as was also that by Wright to substitute the words "General Assembly"

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 879.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 878.

for "Legislature." B. O. Duncan also submitted an amendment which was accepted. He had stricken out that part of the section which required the payment of the principal debt within twenty years following the passage of the law authorizing the debt.⁴¹

Through attacks of Bell and J. L. Neagle with the assistance of Wright and Randolph another section of this report was deleted. Bell opposed that clause which prohibited the grant of the credit of the State to, or in aid of any person, association, or corporation. N. G. Parker opposed the amendment for the reason that the credit of the State had "already been too frequently granted in aid of persons, associations, and incorporations, when it ought not to have been done." In sustaining this position A. C. Richmond pointed out the past errors of the State Government of South Carolina in assisting both the Charleston and Savannah and Blue Ridge railroads. No good business man, Richmond asserted, would have expected either venture to succeed.

George Lee, a Negro delegate from Berkeley, sought to amend the section making the granting of such aid contingent upon the joint vote of both houses of the General Assembly. In this he was unsuccessful. The issue turned largely on the arguments of Randolph and Wright. Randolph opposed the section because it would in his opinion prevent all the internal improvements which the State at that time required. Wright insisted that the progressive age in which they were living demanded progressive measures. The legislature, he urged, was responsible to the people who would require that body to perform its duty. Wright believed, moreover, that the legislature should be free to do for the public what the public good might require. There should not go forth from the convention the report that the people's representatives have not the power to render such assistance. The motion to strike out the section was then decided in the affirmative and the State

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 656-658.

was enabled to render such aid as A. C. Richmond believed it hitherto had given so unwisely.

There arose some discussion as to the advisability of giving county commissioners jurisdiction over roads, highways, ferries, bridges, the collection of local taxes, and the disbursement of county funds. The manner in which the members of the supreme court should obtain their positions also led to some discussion as to whether they should be elected by the people or appointed by the governor. There came up, too, the question as to whether the circuit judges should be elected in the one or the other of these ways.

The deliberations of these delegates resulted in a new constitution which differed in many important respects from that adopted in 1865. The new constitution contained a more detailed statement of the declaration of rights than the former. A new departure in this connection was the declaration of the paramount allegiance of the citizen to the Constitution and Government of the United States. The oath required of all State officials, furthermore, embodied an acknowledgment of allegiance to the Union.

Some other divergences were striking. In indictments for libel the truth of publication might be given in evidence, the jury being the judges of the law and the facts. Offences less than felony, in which the punishment should not exceed \$100 fine or thirty days' imprisonment, were made triable without the intervention of a grand jury. Imprisonment for debt was abolished and a homestead exemption of \$1,000 in lands and \$500 in personalty was granted the head of every family.

The exigencies of the time made necessary certain other important changes. Members of either house of the General Assembly must have resided one year in the State and three months in the county that they represented. This differed from the earlier constitution which required of the senators a residence of five years, and of the representatives a residence of three. With respect to age requirements, furthermore, members of the Senate might be five years younger than formerly.

Noteworthy changes were made also in connection with the executive officers. The term of both the governor and lieutenant governor was fixed at two years; and both were made eligible for reelection. The term of such other officers as the comptroller-general, treasurer, attorney-general, adjutant and inspector general, secretary of state and superintendent of education was made four years in each case. Each officer was eligible for reelection. Active clergymen, moreover, were no longer disqualified from holding office.

The judicial department of the State government underwent a considerable reorganization. The supreme court consisted of three justices to be elected by the legislature for the term of six years. The State was to be divided into convenient circuits and for each circuit a judge was to be elected by joint ballot of the General Assembly for a term of four years. The election of solicitors was vested in the people residing in the several circuits. A court of probate was created for every county and justices of the peace were to be chosen by the qualified electors in each county. There was provided in each county a board of three county commissioners to be elected by the people and to have general charge of the fiscal administration.

Without distinction of race, color or former condition the right of suffrage was conferred upon every male citizen of the United States, of the age of twenty-one years and upwards, not laboring under the disabilities named in this constitution, who was a resident of this State at the time of the adoption of this constitution, or who should thereafter reside in this State for one year and in the county where he would vote sixty days next preceding any election. The disabilities mentioned were those which arose under the provisions of the Reconstruction Acts of Congress as well as those referring to dependents and delinquents. Nor should there be created, moreover, any office the appointment to which should be for a longer time than good behavior. Presidential electors also were required to be elected by the people. A detailed provision

was made for the assessment, levy and collection of taxes upon real and personal property except such as was exempted. The latter included property used for religious, educational, or eleemosynary purposes. The proceeds of the poll tax were appropriated to the public school fund. Provision was made also for the levy and collection of taxes by counties, townships, cities, towns, and school districts for corporate purposes.

A system of free public education was provided for and placed in charge of the State Superintendent of Education assisted in each county by a school commissioner elected by the people for a term of two years. It was made the duty of the legislature, so soon as there should be "a system of public schools thoroughly and completely organized," to require all children between the ages of six and sixteen to attend at either a public or private school for a term equivalent to twenty-four months at least. It was required, furthermore, that "all the public schools, colleges, and universities of the State, supported in whole or in part by the public funds, shall be free and open to all children of this State, without regard to race or color."

Divorces from the bonds of matrimony were not allowed except by the judgment of a court, "as shall be prescribed by law." The real and personal property of a married woman, held at the time of her marriage, or that which she might thereafter acquire, was declared not subject to levy or sale for her husband's debts, but should be held as her separate property which she might dispose of just as if she were unmarried, provided "that no gift or grant from the husband to the wife shall be detrimental to the just claims of his creditors."

All contracts, whether under seal or not, the consideration of which was for the purchase of slaves, were declared null and void and the courts of the State were prohibited from enforcing the same.

It was provided also that after the adoption of the constitution any person who should fight a duel, or send or accept a challenge for that purpose, or aid or abet in fight-

ing a duel, should be deprived of holding any office of honor or trust in the State, and should be otherwise punished as the law should prescribe.

With a constitution and civil government for South Carolina framed in conformity with the Reconstruction Acts of Congress, the convention having been in session fifty-three days adjourned on the seventeenth of March. The constitution which it had made was to be submitted to the qualified voters of the State on the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth days of April. During the month between the adjournment and the ratification, therefore, as well as during the progress of the convention, representative agencies and persons in the State publicly expressed their views on the work of the convention. The Democratic State Convention which met in Columbia expressed the dominant sentiments of the foremost white South Carolinians on the proposed constitution. The platform adopted there urged the people of the State to vote against the "Radical Constitution" and "for good true men for all offices within their gift." The platform, inspired by B. F. Perry, reaffirmed the recognition by that party of the colored people as an integral part of the body politic; "and as such in person and property, entitled to a full and equal protection under the State Constitution and laws." It was further declared to be the willingness of the citizens of South Carolina, upon their resumption of power, to grant to the Negroes "under proper qualifications as to property and intelligence, the right of suffrage." Perry opposed the "Radical Constitution" because all taxation by that instrument was upon real estate and the sale of merchandise. The taxable property, he asserted, furthermore, was held by one class of the people and the law making power by another. Perry was dissatisfied also with the homestead provision in that its action was merely prospective.⁴²

John S. Preston viewed the constitution in much the same light as Perry. In a letter to Colonel J. P. Thomas,

⁴² *Courier*, April 9, 1868.—Compiled from Reports of the *Columbia Phoenix*.

Preston attacked this frame of government as infamous and trusted that decent citizens, white and black, would cast their votes against it. The Negroes, he did not consider responsible for the impending ruin. They were victims of the corrupt domination of false hearted renegades and radical emissaries.⁴³

The constitution was likewise opposed by W. D. Porter, who in declining the proffered nomination for governor by the Democratic Party stated his main objection to the document. According to Porter, the practical operation of the constitution, its design and purpose was to subvert and reverse the relations theretofore existing between the two classes that constitute the population of the State. It took the political power out of the hands of the educated white class and placed it in the hands of the uneducated Negroes. By enfranchising the blacks and disfranchising many whites it had assured the political ascendancy of the former who had already an excess of 25,000 registered voters. This was the first instance in republican government, Porter asserted, that intelligence, education and property had by fundamental law been bound and laid prostrate at the feet of mere numbers.⁴⁴

I. W. Hayne, who also declined a nomination by the Democratic State Convention, considered any expression of opinion on the subject of qualified Negro suffrage to be at that time unfortunate. The resolution adopted in Columbia, in his opinion, was not sound in principle, and in policy, a blunder. The nomination of State officers under such a constitution he considered an error both in principle and policy. He could not, therefore, consent to be considered a candidate. If the voters, however, with a knowledge of this fact should choose to make him an exponent of their opposition to the "infamous constitution" about to be submitted, that would be to him a matter of indifference. To vote against the constitution, he considered the duty of every white man and every far-seeing Negro who loves his

⁴³ *Courier*, April 9, 1868.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1868.

race. He doubted, however, that many such of the latter would be found.⁴⁵

The *Courier*, moreover, undertook to analyze the constitution to exhibit the defects that demanded its rejection. In an address to the people of South Carolina, this daily prefaced this analysis with a statement on the condition of the State and the duties of the citizens. According to this organ, the people had been robbed of all civil, constitutional and political rights and put under an absolute military despotism. "The life, liberty, and property of every individual are placed at the mercy of military satraps. Military commissions and drumhead court martials have been everywhere substituted for trial by jury. Worse than all this, the people are menaced with Negro rule and supremacy at the point of the sword and bayonet. Sixty odd Negroes, many of them ignorant and depraved, together with fifty white men, 'outcasts of Northern society and Southern renegades, betrayers of their race and country, have assembled in Convention and framed a Constitution for the government of South Carolina.' South Carolina, therefore, must unite with the National Democratic party, North and South, in their most vigorous efforts to prevent all this monstrous injustice and oppression and subversion of the American Republic. Those who are permitted must consider it their sacred duty to go to the polls and vote for State officers, members of the Legislature and members of Congress." They should show the Negroes that it is to their interests to vote with them. Citizens must unite amongst themselves as one man, in South Carolina, "to defeat this bogus constitution," which must be submitted shortly for ratification.⁴⁶

The opposition of the whites to the new constitution was carried to the Congress of the United States, when that instrument was submitted for its approval. The whites of South Carolina despatched a "Respectful Remonstrance on behalf of the White People of South Caro-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, April 11, 1868.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, April 9, 1868.

lina against the Constitution of the late Convention of that State, now submitted to Congress for Ratification.”⁴⁷ At a later date, moreover, there was submitted “An appeal to the Honorable Senate of the United States.”⁴⁸ These futile efforts constituted in substance a recitation of the oft repeated objections so concisely stated in an earlier issue of the *Courier*.

There was at least one leading South Carolinian of the old regime with whom the constitution found some favor. Governor James L. Orr took the occasion both in his message prepared for the called session of the legislature in 1868, and in his farewell address to the people of South Carolina to state his view on the new constitution. While approving the homestead provision in the new constitution, Governor Orr said in part:

“The great advantage of this measure is that while it identifies every citizen with the soil and nourishes his love of state and country, it is likewise an inducement to the laborer to save his earnings and invest them in a permanent residence where his wife and children may have shelter and protection.” With respect to the doubts entertained as to the constitutionality of applying the homestead law to debts already existing, continued the governor: “A careful examination of the decisions which have been made in other states settled the question beyond peradventure, that the General Assembly has the authority to apply the exemption to existing debts, even such as may now be in judgment and execution, as well as to future debts.”

Orr approved the establishment of a uniform system of education modified to suit the needs of South Carolina, but deplored the failure of the constitution to provide separate schools for the two races. “In the new relation between the two races,” he said, “the prudence of grown people is taxed to its tension to prevent disagreeable antagonisms. How much less will such prudence characterize the relation between children of the two races under

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1868.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1868.

the same roof." These prejudices of race whether just or not do exist and must be taken into account in matters of this sort. Orr advised also the establishment of a separate university for whites and Negroes, proposing the citadel for the use of the latter.⁴⁹

In his farewell address to the people of South Carolina, Governor Orr declared the ratification of the new constitution occasioned the first instance in history of a free people who, possessing the right of suffrage, refused its exercise and abdicated the power, rights and privileges which their intelligence, experience and wealth would have enabled them to wield successfully. "If, therefore, he concluded, the constitution framed is obnoxious, very many of the intelligent white voters of the State must feel that the fault is their own." The constitution was ratified by a handsome majority.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, July 8, 1868.

⁵⁰ Orr advocated qualified suffrage for the Negro from a high motive as well as because he knew that suffrage would be enforced. There were, he asserted, colored men in the State who enjoyed some educational advantages and others who had accumulated property. In legislation affecting the life, liberty, property and pursuit of happiness of this class of the population, was it not fair they should have some voice in choosing the representatives to make those laws? According to Orr, these views which were regarded with great odium when he first publicly declared them were then embraced by large numbers of citizens and respectable organizations from all sections of the State.

CHAPTER IX

THE RECONSTRUCTIONISTS AND THEIR MEASURES

It will be interesting to inquire as to the character of the men ushered into office by the reorganization of the government of South Carolina under the Reconstruction Acts. The majority of the whites arrayed in opposition to this government found no virtue at all in the whites or blacks who participated therein. As a rule these functionaries were denounced by the pulpit and the press as unworthy. The Negro officeholders were referred to as an "ignorant," "degraded," "depraved," "low" and "venal group" and the legislature in which Negroes figured conspicuously as a majority of one of its branches was commonly referred to as a "menagerie." Southern native whites who participated in the reconstruction and held office under the new constitution were denounced as "Scalawags" unworthy to associate with the aristocracy. The adventurers from the North passed among the Southerners as "Carpet-baggers"; but finding this term inadequate the unreconstructed often dubbed them "Southern Vultures" and "Birds of Prey."

Now and then, however, the State press, represented mainly by the *News* and *Courier*, with their various correspondents from different parts of the State, expressed opinions about these officers decidedly to the contrary of what they had often said about them as a whole. Some of the whites belonging to the class of "Scalawags" and "Carpetbaggers" were at times all but lauded by the State press. According to the *Courier* of December 9, 1870, T. J. Robertson, elected United States Senator from South Carolina was a "man of excellent business capacity." F. J. Moses, another native also serving the State, was referred to in the same issue as "one of the ablest members of the Senate." Speaking of his services as Chief Justice after 1868, this paper said: "He discharged the duties of

this office with fidelity and ability." According to the Columbia correspondent in his letter to the *Courier* of February 18, 1871, reporting the election of Montgomery Moses as Judge of the 7th judicial circuit, he was considered a sound and able lawyer. The *Courier* itself said, "He is a lawyer of large experience, conservative in politics and of sound judgment."

As the reorganized government of South Carolina progressed, however, the whites seemed to become more and more embittered against those of their race functioning in the new government than they seemed to be against the Negroes. The appointment of Charles M. Wilder as postmaster of Columbia is a case in evidence. Although there went up a protest from the whites of the State, referring to him as being incompetent for various reasons, the correspondent of the *Daily News* of April 13, 1869, said: "Wilder is well known, and apart from his contact with the party in which he serves, is universally respected. He has but little education and moderate ability; but is not defiled by any of the arrant prostitution of principles that smutches almost every one of his party associates. He is the most decent Negro of the radical party that could have been appointed, and, Negro as he is, he stands head and shoulders above the white 'scalawags' and 'carpetbaggers,' who have wound themselves through dirty ways into so many of our offices."

Referring to various other Negroes of the reconstruction government thereafter, too, the white press often gave the same testimony. In the report of the discussion of the act to abolish capital punishment except for wilful murder, the Columbia correspondent of the *Courier* reported on January 25, 1869, that "in a speech one hour and a half in length R. C. DeLarge combatted the argument of the opposition ably and logically." Elliott, he said, spoke in favor of the bill and "ably combatted the argument of the opposition." On December 2, 1869, the *Courier* gave prominence to the opinion of Judge Woodland of Pennsylvania, a member of Congress who visited the

legislature and reported his very favorable impression of Robert Brown Elliott whom he regarded as the ablest man in that body and a good speaker. When on November 30, 1869, the *Daily News* reported that Whipper, a Negro member of the legislature, had a good chance of being elected judge, he was referred to as "an intelligent man and very popular in the party."¹ In 1870 *The Chesterfield Democrat* said that in nominating Henry L. Shrewsbury for Congress they had named a man whose record in the legislature was that of "an opponent of corruption." This paper further said: "He is a native colored man born and reared in Charleston, where he sustained a good reputation which he has kept intact under great temptations; ever since he has been among us. It is said of him that he resisted indignantly all the corrupting influences at Columbia, and we know that he has exerted himself zealously and courageously to guard his people from imposition and vindicate their claim to decency and respectability. He is intelligent and understands the true interest of all classes to be endangered by the arts and schemes of unprincipled adventurers against whom he has taken decided stand."²

Referring to W. H. Jones, a member of the legislature from Georgetown in 1870, the Columbia correspondent of the *Courier* said he "speaks well and to the point, and will take a prominent stand."³ Jamison, another Negro member in that same legislature, was reported as "an irascible little colored man, possessed, however, of a considerable amount of sound practical sense."⁴ A few weeks later this reporter said, "Dr. Bosemon, a colored member from Charleston, and an intelligent educated man, fought against the measure alone long and firmly."^{4a}

The very next day this same paper said, in speaking of the opposition to the Metropolitan Police Bill, "(June) Mobley was the only member who had the manliness to come out

¹ *News*, September 13 and November 30, 1869.

² *Courier*, April 5, 1870.

³ *Ibid.*, December 11, 1870.

⁴ *Ibid.*, January 9, 1871.

^{4a} *Ibid.*, February 8, 1871.

squarely and face the issue; and his sentiments, it will be conceded by all thinking men, do him indefinite credit.”⁵

The Abbeville Press, referring to the good sign for reform seen in F. L. Cardoza’s action in applying for an injunction against former Treasurer Niles G. Parker in 1873 to prevent the wasting of money on fraudulent claims, said: “The Treasurer is an able officer of undoubted integrity, and let the legislature only do their duty in the way of reform and there will be little danger of any waste of public money.”⁶ Making an estimate of the services of Samuel Lee, the *News and Courier* said on September 4, 1874, that he is “tolerably well educated and speaks fearlessly and forcibly.” This same organ on December 21, 1874, in commending the efforts of Bamfield for reform, reported him as “a very young man of very calm nerves and an evenly balanced mind,” who, in spite of interruption, “preserved his equanimity and proceeded with his speech.” Some Southerners, moreover, did not differ much in their attitude from that of travelers who found the Negro members of the General Assembly superior to the white members of that body.^{6a}

James S. Pike, who championed the cause of the native whites of South Carolina, nevertheless had some commendable things to say in behalf of the Negro members of the legislature. After paying a tribute to the chaplain of that body Pike said: “Take the Chairman of the House Committee of Ways and Means. He is another full-black man. By his position, he has charge of the most important business of the House. He was elected for his solid qualities, and he seems always to conduct himself with discretion. Two of the best speakers in the House are quite black. . . . Go into the Senate. It is not too much to say that the leading man of the Republican party in that body is Beverly Nash, a man wholly black. He is apparently consulted more and appealed to more, in the business of the body, than any

⁵ *Ibid.*, February 9, 1872.

⁶ *The Columbia Union*, Jan. 14, 1873.

^{6a} F. Barham Zincke, *Last Winter in the United States*, 123-124; James S. Pike, *The Prostrate State*, 33-34.

man in it. It is admitted by his white opposition colleagues that he has more native ability than half the white men in the Senate.”^{6b}

It was generally conceded by all that many of the Negro members of the legislature were illiterate, as was the case in some other legislatures of that day composed altogether of white persons. These Negro members, however, were not necessarily ignorant. They had common sense, and in most cases used it to the best advantage. There were among them a number who, in spite of their illiteracy and untutored language, undertook to address the legislature, but they usually found such speech so unacceptable and themselves so lacking in the capacity for leadership that they generally deferred to the judgment of those better qualified. According to the testimony of the Southern whites themselves, as mentioned above, there were in all of these sessions of the legislature a number of well trained Negroes qualified to direct their co-workers in the right way.

In the case of those Negroes attaining the highest position in the State there was little question as to their qualifications. J. J. Wright became an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and by his knowledge of legal matters acquitted himself with honor. F. L. Cardoza, who served the State as Secretary of State and Treasurer, had been trained at the University of Glasgow to the extent that he was regarded by his friends and enemies as one of the best educated men in the State of South Carolina, regardless of his color.

It was conceded, moreover, by most fairminded men that the Negroes of South Carolina, who represented South Carolina in Congress, were men of high order. R. H. Cain, who served two terms in that body, passed among the whites and blacks of South Carolina as a minister of strong force of character and an editor of considerable ability. This is evidenced by the frequent quoting of his sound editorials by the *News* and *Courier*, from which he often received

^{6b} *Ibid.*, 33-34.

unstinted praise. Sir George Campbell, a member of the British Parliament who visited South Carolina in 1878, inquired into this very matter. He said a distinguished colonel to whom Governor Wade Hampton had given him introduction, admitted that the black members of Congress from that State were pretty decent men, although he could not say the same of the members of the Assembly. Speaking further on this point, Campbell said: "Hitherto, three congressional districts in the black part of South Carolina have been represented by black men, and I am told that they were of very fair specimens. The representative of the Charleston district was a well educated Negro from the North. The Georgetown district was represented by an extremely polished black gentleman, who was formerly a very popular barber in Charleston and is not at all a bad sort of person. The Beaufort district has long been represented by General S. (Smalls) who while a slave was employed as a pilot and in the rôle distinguished himself by carrying off a Confederate vessel and delivering her to the Federals. He has now great influence among his race and is not unpopular among the white people. He behaved well towards his former master's family and assisted them.' Referring elsewhere to this gentleman Campbell said: "I also made the acquaintance of General S. (Smalls) the Negro Congressman for the district who had just been ousted in the recent election or rather will be in consequence, for the American arrangement in this respect is very peculiar."⁷ Referring to General Smalls whom he visited again, Sir George Campbell said: "I still like General S. (Smalls) on further acquaintance. He is not very highly educated or brilliant, but is a thoroughly representative man among the people and seems to have their unlimited confidence."⁸

In many cases, moreover, the Negro candidates for Congress were preferred by the whites who felt that they

⁷ Campbell, *White and Black in the United States*, 346-347.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 337.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 361.

represented more than the adventurers. In the election of Robert C. DeLarge to Congress, it was reported that the whites voted for him in preference to the candidate of their own race because the former was considered better qualified for the position.^{9a} Speaking of the election of John J. Patterson as United States Senator, when Robert Brown Elliott and R. K. Scott were also candidates for that position, the *News* and *Courier* regretted that Elliott failed of election, inasmuch as he was more influential than either of the others and represented a majority of the people of the State, whereas they represented nothing whatever.¹⁰

The effect of this exaltation of the Negroes to office may be interesting. There were those who looked upon their new position as giving them a higher status than that of the whites and in their manner undertook to lord it over their former masters. The Negroes were especially anxious to figure in almost any sort of display. Emancipation Day was usually the occasion of the beating of drums and the marching of militia. The celebration of the Fourth of July, and other such holidays, was practically taken over by the Negroes in certain parts with the white people as interested observers. Negroes were anxious to have the whites cooperate, but they haughtily refused. And little wonder that they abstained therefrom, for the Negro orators of these occasions idealized liberty and the inalienable rights of man, which the native whites thought belonged only to their race.

There were complaints as to the procedure of Negro officeholders. They were usually referred to as ignorant, and some of them were. In spite of their ignorance they undertook to maintain themselves in their position with all of the dignity belonging thereto. They were not so inefficient as writers sometimes make it appear, for if they were, a larger number of cases would have been reported. White newspapers took delight in pointing out such instances as that of a Negro magistrate who set a case for hearing on

^{9a} Robert Somers, *Southern States Since the War*, 43.

¹⁰ *Courier*, December 11, 1872.

the 31st of September.¹¹ Another Negro magistrate was declared guilty of an outrage because he punished a white man for contempt, when he came into his court without taking his hat off.¹²

Then there were charges of downright cruelty on the part of Negro officers.¹³ Almost any arrest of a white man of the aristocratic class, however, it mattered not in what way it was carried out, was considered an outrageous cruelty in South Carolina at that time. Under the former regime no aristocrat as a rule was arrested for anything. If he committed an offense which was not capital, it was handled in a diplomatic way. As the reconstruction officeholders, however, could not be governed by any such procedure, they incurred the displeasure of the haughty native whites.¹⁴

¹¹ *Ibid.*, September 13, 1869.

¹² *Ibid.*, September 6, 1869.

¹³ *News*, July 22, 1869; *Courier*, September, October, and November 20, 1869.

¹⁴ Socially, however, the upheaval did not make very much difference in the status of the Negro. Because of the intense feeling existing between the two races social intercourse was impracticable. The Negroes early enacted a civil rights bill by which they hoped to break down the barriers in restaurants, hotels and places of amusement, but the white man usually found some way to evade the law. For instance, not long after the enactment of such a measure some Negroes went into a restaurant in Columbia, South Carolina, but the keeper got rid of them by closing his windows to prevent others from knowing that he had them there.

Privately, however, the barriers, as stated above, seemed to break down; for poor white persons, feeling that the new order was permanent, braved the barriers of caste prejudice and married Negroes. Hearing that Bet Hancock (white) had married Jim Gour (black), the citizens of Timmons ville, where this happened, held an indignation meeting and passed resolutions to the effect that they looked upon the marriage as contrary to the laws of God and civil society, and "We take this method," said they, "to express our indignation not only in this case, but in all like cases, and we will use our best efforts to prevent such a disgraceful occurrence in this community." They censured the white magistrate who performed the ceremony and thanked the colored magistrate for refusing to do so. *News*, April 23, 1869.

One week later, however, the *Courier* reported that C. P. Woods, a white man, of Beaufort, South Carolina, had married Susan Ulmer, a Negro woman. The *Courier* said, moreover, "It is the third marriage of the kind that has taken place in the State." On June 21, 1869, the *News* reported that on the third at Mile Creek, Fairfield County, Esquire John Crompton, a white Carolinian, performed the ceremony of marriage of Paul Harl (colored) to Josey Brennan (white), according to the *Phoenix*.

There were usually against the white officeholders, however, more complaints of cruelty than against the Negroes functioning as such. For example, when the sheriff had arrested a respectable white citizen in a way which the *Courier* correspondent from Sumter felt was unbecoming, this reporter said: "In this vile outrage the Negro constable who accompanied the party was the only member of it who exhibited decency or respect. We have been pleased to learn, and we take pleasure in making known the fact, that a large number of the more intelligent of the colored people do not sympathize with this action of the State government."¹⁵

Negro officers were even commended by the whites for executing the law when it had been expected that they might show some favor to the members of their own race. In Darlington on the occasion of hanging a Negro murderer it was reported that he expected to be delivered from the law by the agents of the Union League to which he belonged. But he was attended by an escort of 70 men, 30 of whom, including the sheriff, were Negroes, and he was hanged according to the demands of the law.¹⁶

There were a few cases of groups of Negroes attempting to resist officers trying to arrest members of their race.¹⁷ These occurrences, according to the press of that day, however, were not frequent. More trouble, on the other hand, arose when Negro officers undertook to arrest white men. White men resisted them and very often called in their friends to assist them in overcoming the law. They did this for the reason that it was something new. They were unaccustomed to arrest by persons who had formerly occupied an inferior status in that State. Thinking that the Negroes were vindictive, moreover, and knowing of how cruelly and despotically they had been treated by the whites, the latter did not know how they would fare in the hands of the Negroes, and especially so when in prison.

¹⁵ *Courier*, November 20, 1869.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, June 21, 1869.

¹⁷ *News*, April 20, July 17, 1869.

Let us now direct attention to the behavior of the legislature. The first General Assembly elected under the reconstruction government in South Carolina met in a special session at Columbia on July 6, 1868. The recently enfranchised Negroes constituted a majority of the body on joint ballot, but comprised a minority in the Senate. The Senate consisted of 33 members, including 9 Negroes. The House of Representatives consisted of 16 white members and 78 Negroes. In this respect, the succeeding legislatures exhibited much the same general character as the first. Yet the Negroes did not always constitute a majority on joint ballot. From 1874 to 1876 the whites constituted a majority in each House. The Senate during these two years consisted of 17 white members and 16 Negroes. The House was composed of 63 white members and 61 Negroes. The legislature was elected biennially, although it convened in annual sessions. Since there was a Republican majority at each session, however, that party, despite the presence of some Democrats in the General Assembly, shaped the legislation enacted by that body from 1868 until the reconstructionists were overthrown in 1876.

Most of the first legislation enacted during the special session of 1868 related especially to the organization of the State and local governments, and the definition of the powers of judges, county commissioners, sheriffs, "magistrates," and juries.^{17a} The abuse of power by these officials soon made necessary supplementary legislation to curb the power of these officials in the effort to prevent fraud and to eliminate political influence.¹⁸ In connection with the status of the freedmen, certain other measures were enacted further defining and guaranteeing their rights. Thus there was passed during the regular session of 1868 several acts to enforce the provision of the Civil Rights Bill enacted by Congress. The validity of the measure was established when the Courts convicted and punished John T. Ford, who had refused to admit some Negroes to the

^{17a} *Acts*, 1868, pp. 5-10, 72-73, 76-80, 100-101, 128-135.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1870-1871, pp. 662, 655-656, 690-693.

“orchestra chairs” of the Musical Academy in Charleston.¹⁹ Keepers of such places, however, usually found some way to evade the law in the interest of the native white who feared “social equality.”

At the special session of 1868, there was passed a measure to effect the temporary organization of the free common school system. Two years later that system was organized as contemplated by the constitutional provision. Important changes improving this measure were made in an amendment thereto, approved March 6, 1871. As finally constituted the common school act was perhaps the most significant legislation enacted during the reconstruction. It was freely criticized in that it did not specifically provide for the separate education of the races. Criticisms were likewise directed against the frauds connected with its administration. Yet the outstanding merit of the act itself, the popularization of education in a State where illiteracy was widespread, overshadowed any defect, although maladministration can not be excused.²⁰

There was passed at the session of 1868–1869 an educational measure especially repugnant to many whites. This was an act reorganizing the State University. This law declared that no distinction should be made in the admission of students or the management of the university on account of race, color or creed. It provided further for the annual admission to the university, from each county in the State, of one student who should be entitled to entrance into three schools of the university, that of medicine and law excepted, without the payment of tuition or fees.²¹ Shortly thereafter, there were established permanent quadrennial State scholarships in the university by an act approved February 20, 1874. These scholarships, of an annual value of \$200 each, were to be apportioned among the counties according to their representation in the General

¹⁹ *Courier*, January 10, 1870.

²⁰ *Acts, Special Session*, 1868, pp. 23, 24.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1868–1869, pp. 203, 204.

Assembly. The scholarships were to be awarded on the basis of public competitive examinations.²²

Yet at the session of 1871-1872 the whites opposed an act to enforce the payment of the poll tax, so closely connected with education. The collection of that tax had been much impeded since the law imposed no penalty for its non-payment. Inasmuch as the Negroes were reported to be the chief sinners in this connection, the new law, it appears, should have been supported as a measure designed to require the freedman to do his duty. By this new measure, the delinquent was required to pay double the tax, in default of which he was to be forced to work on the public roads of his county not exceeding three days. Continued refusal to submit to the law constituted a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for a period of ten days.²³

Another series of important measures extending relief or protection to various classes of citizens were enacted at the special session of 1868. Such was the enactment of a homestead law to carry out the constitutional provisions for the protection of the homestead when the real estate of the head of a family residing in the State was legally attached for any debt. This law was later amended to secure its enforcement and to extend the exemption to the poor and laboring classes.²⁴

The act providing for a Land Commission was passed in 1868-1869. This law set up an advisory board required to appoint the land commissioner whose execution of official duties should be in strict conformity with the instructions of the board. The commissioner was required to purchase improved or unimproved lands in any portion of the State and sell the same in plots of not less than twenty-five acres or greater than one hundred, to actual settlers, subject to the conditions provided by the ordinance creat-

²² *Ibid.*, 1873-1874, pp. 555-557.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1871-1872, p. 186.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, *Special Session*, 1868, pp. 19-21; *Ibid.*, 1868-1869; *Ibid.*, 1869-1870, p. 380; *Courier, Supplement*, Feb. 13, 1869.

ing the Land Commission. For the purposes of this act the State issued \$200,000 worth of bonds and later increased this by an amendment to \$700,000. By this supplementary measure, enacted in 1869-1870, the commissioner was declared to be subject to the action of the majority of the board and the purchase of any State land without their advice was to be deemed invalid. No purchase was to be made without the certain knowledge of the commissioner, however, that he might be able to sell the same without delay.²⁵

The establishment of the Land Commission constituted in itself one of the most meritorious projects of the reconstruction legislature. It was designed especially to aid the poor in the acquisition of land. The organization of the agency, however, was faulty. The authority was delegated to five commissioners, and the responsibility was divided in constituting, as a quorum to decide all questions of policy and procedure, any three of them, whose assent could be obtained either individually or together. This afforded, then, an excellent opportunity for the perpetration of fraud by the dishonest commissioner, C. P. Leslie. When he turned that office over to R. C. DeLarge, a Negro, the reputation of the Land Commission had been already seriously impaired. Thereafter the office was to be administered by a board composed of the governor, the comptroller-general, the secretary of state, and the attorney-general; and the business was to be transacted under their direction through local agents.

Legislation of another class tended to promote the agricultural and industrial interests of the State.²⁶ A most important measure of this kind, passed in 1868, established a "Bureau of Agricultural Statistics for the encouragement of industrial enterprise and to invite capital to South Carolina for the development of the resources of the State."²⁷ The laudable purposes of this legislation were

²⁵ *Acts*, 1868-1869, pp. 275-277; 1869-1870, pp. 385-386.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, *Special Session*, 1868, pp. 118-119.

apparently realized in part by the bureau whose work was highly commended by Governor Scott. Yet, early during the reconstruction, this law was repealed and the duties of the commissioner of agriculture delegated to the secretary of state in 1871.²⁸

The industrial interests of South Carolina were further favored at the session of 1868-1869 by a measure designed to aid the cotton and woolen manufactures in the State. This measure declared that any individual or association of persons who should thereafter invest capital in the manufacture of cotton or woolen fabrics in the State should be entitled to receive from the state treasurer, annually, a sum of money equal to the aggregate amount of State taxes laid and collected upon the property, or capital employed directly and exclusively in such manufactures. The benefits of this legislation were later extended to the manufacture of paper, iron, lime, agricultural implements, and to shipbuilding.²⁹

A measure of this class known as the Phosphate Act encountered strenuous opposition during the progress of its passage in 1869-1870. The prolonged debate consumed much of the time of the legislature because the measure seemed to open the way for fraud. It was fearlessly attacked throughout the State and was vetoed by Governor Scott on the ground that it was a monopoly grant which might involve the State in expensive litigation to protect the rights of the grantees. Its passage would also throw hundreds of men out of employment. The veto, however, was overridden by a vote of 77 to 24 in the House, and 19 to 5 in the Senate. As finally passed, however, the act merely granted to certain persons and their associates the right to dig and mine in the beds of the navigable streams and waters of the State for phosphate rocks and phosphate deposits, for a period of twenty-one years.³⁰

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1871-1872, p. 35.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1869-1870, p. 411; 1873-1874, pp. 513-514.

³⁰ *House Journal*, 1869-1870, pp. 512-516; *Senate Journal*, 1869-1870, p. 526.

The reconstruction legislators also undertook to promote internal improvements. To some extent the measures enacted for this purpose provided for the construction and repair of public roads or the improvement of waterways;³¹ but, in the main, they extended State aid to railroads. A measure of this sort passed in 1868 to assist further the Blue Ridge Railroad. By this act, the General Assembly pledged the funds of the State to secure the payment of bonds to the amount of \$4,000,000 that the railroad might obtain a loan of that sum of money in order to complete improvements it had already begun. The endorsement of the company's bonds to the extent of \$1,000,000 had been authorized, moreover, by the General Assembly before the war, but it had never been carried out. To secure the State in the performance of the new contract the railroad company pledged to the commonwealth a first mortgage on all of its properties in the States of North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina. Other safeguards were made to secure further the State which authorized an advance of \$20,000 in cash to be paid to the road immediately for operating purposes.³²

At the session of 1868-1869, the General Assembly reenacted an act lending the name and credit of the State to the Greenville and Columbia Railroad and declared valid the action of the company thereunder. The act reenacted had been ratified under the provisional government on December 20, 1866. It proposed to enable the company to fund the interest due upon their mortgage and guaranteed debt for the six months from January 1, 1868, to July 1, 1868. For this purpose the comptroller-general was authorized to endorse the name and credit of the State upon the bonds and certificates of indebtedness of the company to the amount of \$50,000. This act was not to be enforced, however, until the company's charter should be so amended as to comply with the taxation clause of the State Consti-

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1868-1876.

³² *Ibid.*, *Special Session*, 1868, pp. 25-26.

tution.³³ The measure was vetoed by Governor Scott upon the grounds of unconstitutionality and inexpediency. Every augmentation of the debt of the State, he held, injuriously affected its credit and increased the burden of the taxpayer. This act he considered indefensible, furthermore, for it was based upon an action of a body not recognized by the present legislature. The General Assembly, nevertheless, sustained its own course in overriding the executive veto by a substantial vote.³⁴

At the same session the General Assembly likewise assisted the Savannah and Charleston Railroad to complete certain improvements. The company was empowered to borrow a sum of money not exceeding \$500,000 to be raised by an issue of bonds aggregating the same amount. Subject to certain requirements these bonds were to be guaranteed by the State. The lien of the State on the property of the road was to become a second lien to cover the whole road, its outfit and real estate.³⁵

The legislature also passed an act to regulate the rights and powers of railroad companies at the session of 1868-1869. One of the rights granted permitted the consolidation of railroads organized under the laws of the State. Besides, roads for whose securities the State was in anywise liable were urged to discharge their obligations within two years from the passage of this act in return for which the charters of such would be extended to run for fifty years from the date.³⁶

Under the authority of this measure, there was passed at the legislative session of 1869-1870 an act to promote the consolidation of the Greenville and Columbia Railroad Company and the Blue Ridge Railroad Company. This authorized the expansion of the roads and extended the time limit for the completion of improvements. The issuance of the bonds by the Blue Ridge under the Act of Sep-

³³ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, p. 183.

³⁴ *South Carolina House and Senate Journals*, 1868-1869.

³⁵ *Acts*, 1868-1869.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, pp. 334-337.

tember 15, 1868, and the endorsement of the same by the comptroller-general, were confirmed as was also the mortgage made and executed by Blue Ridge Railroad and other companies in favor of certain designated mortgagees to secure the payment of certain bonds. This mortgage was, therefore, declared a prior lien to the State lien on the properties described in the mortgage. All other mortgages or liens against the Greenville and Columbia Railroad were made subsequent to the new one. That part of the Act of September 15, 1868, limiting the use of the bonds arising from the aid extended by that act was repealed. The bonds held severally by the companies had to be endorsed jointly and it was declared that the comptroller-general upon the failure of the consolidated company to pay its debt would take possession of the road.³⁷

This measure the *Charleston Daily Courier* considered a menace to the wealth of the people of South Carolina. It demanded the State, according to this paper, to withdraw its lien on the railroad property concerned so as to remain no longer collaterally liable for the debt of \$4,000,000 but absolutely so. Every such measure the *Courier* regarded a stricture on the Constitution of the State and an attack on the rights and purse of the people.³⁸

Some of the measures enacted to promote internal improvements soon brought the General Assembly to grief. This was attested by the enactment of a measure in 1870-1871, which required the attorney-general to institute suits against those railroads whose payment of interest then due remained unpaid on bonds issued by them with the endorsement of the State. Such suits were to be started against roads not paying within thirty days after the passage of the act. Where, however, the statutory or other lien or mortgage held by the State against the roads failed to realize from the sales thereof an amount sufficient to pay the principal and interest on bonds, the deficiency was declared to become a just debt of the State to be paid

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1869-1870.

³⁸ *Courier*, March 2, 4, 7, 1871.

by the State. Suits were accordingly directed against the Spartanburg and Union, and the Charleston and Savannah railroads. As a result the former was sold in 1872; but the latter, losing its case in the Circuit Court, appealed to the State Supreme Court. There the appeal was dismissed and remanded to the Circuit Court for further proceedings.³⁹

The measure providing aid for the Blue Ridge Railroad likewise brought unhappy results as attested by the enactment of an act to relieve the State of its guaranty of the bonds of that company and providing for the securing and destruction of the same. The guaranty of the faith and credit of the State had been endorsed on \$4,000,000 of bonds issued by the Blue Ridge Railroad Company of South Carolina in the act passed in 1868, authorizing that company to complete its road. The new act declared that the financial condition of both the State and the company was such as to make the continuance of the bonds on the market inexpedient, inadvisable and injurious to the credit of the State. The financial agent of the State, in New York, was directed to deliver to the state treasurer all bonds of the railroad in his possession, and the treasurer was required to cancel the same. The Blue Ridge Railroad Company should then be discharged of all liability to the State for advances made for which these bonds had served as collateral security.

Upon the surrender by the company, to the treasurer, of the balance of these bonds, that functionary was required to deliver to the president of the company treasury certificates of indebtedness styled "Revenue Bond Scrip" to the amount of \$1,800,000 or a proportionate amount thereof, in case of a failure to surrender all of the bonds. The bond scrip was to be printed, and signed by the state treasurer. One-fourth of the scrip was to be retired annually. The faith and funds of the State were pledged to the redemption of the scrip for which an annual tax of three mills

³⁹ *Acts*, 1870-1871, pp. 612, 613; *Reports and Resolutions*, 1873-1874, pp. 730, 736; 1874-1875, p. 469; 1875-1876, pp. 359-362.

on the dollar was to be levied on all taxable property in the State. The lien of the State upon the estate of the Blue Ridge Company was discharged.⁴⁰ The measure was disapproved by the Governor whose veto was overridden in the House by a vote of 84 to 14, and in the Senate by 22 to 6. Although the act providing an annual tax to redeem the "Revenue Bond Scrip" was later repealed at the session of 1873-1874,⁴¹ the former act was declared the basis of much of the corruption which followed.

Measures affecting the administration of the public finance, like those in the interest of internal improvements, engendered the vigorous opposition of the native whites. A measure of this nature, passed in 1868, fixed the annual salaries of the State officers. The governor was allowed \$3,500; his private secretary \$2,000. The lieutenant-governor was granted mileage and paid at the rate of \$10 a day during the session, although this was increased at a later session of the legislature to \$2,500 exclusive of his pay as president of the Senate. The salary of the adjutant-general was \$2,500. The treasurer was paid a salary of \$2,500 and allowed a clerk at \$1,800. The salary of the attorney-general was \$3,000 with an allowance of \$1,000, later increased to \$1,500, for clerical assistance. The comptroller-general was paid a salary of \$3,000 and the superintendent of education \$2,500.⁴²

Yet the salary schedule was augmented by the addition from time to time of certain officers and commissioners and the increase of clerical assistance in the executive offices. Not only was the number of officers increased, but the reconstruction government paid these functionaries, in general, higher salaries individually than either the preceding or succeeding administrations.⁴³ As a result of a loud out-crying opposition the pay of the members of the General Assembly was adjusted so as not to exceed \$600 a regular

⁴⁰ *Acts*, 1871-1872, pp. 79-83.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1873-1874, p. 479.

⁴² *Ibid.*, *Special Session*, 1868, pp. 88-89, 135-136.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1857-1860; 1868-1876; 1877-1880.

session, exclusive of mileage. The Inferior Court of Charleston County for the trial of criminal causes, established in 1872, was abolished.⁴⁴ A drastic downward revision of the salary schedule, furthermore, reduced the salaries of the executive department by nearly thirty per cent and of certain county officers by approximately ten per cent. These the *Charleston News and Courier* considered substantial legislative reforms especially since the abolishment of the Inferior Court of Charleston constituted a saving of \$50,000 a year.⁴⁵

Purporting to regulate the finances of the State the legislature passed a measure in 1868 to close the operations of the Bank of the State. It authorized the sale of the assets of that institution, and required the attorney-general to collect all debts and choses in action of the bank. The proceeds of such sales and collections were to be kept in a separate account from other State funds, and the State was pledged to pay the funded debt arising in connection with the closing of the institution.⁴⁶ This measure, opposed by certain members of the legislature and the general public, was not carried out as contemplated. The proceedings instituted by the attorney-general to obtain possession of the assets of the bank brought from the State Supreme Court the decision that these assets were "a fund in equity" which could only be administered by the court. Other legal questions therewith involved kept the measure for some years a matter of litigation.⁴⁷

Various financial schemes had to be devised to meet the increasing obligations of the State. The governor was authorized in 1868 to borrow \$125,000, wherewith to meet the current expenses of the State. He was also empowered to borrow on the credit of the State, on coupon bonds, within twelve months from the passage of the act, a sum of money not exceeding \$500,000 to redeem the "bills re-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1874-1875.

⁴⁵ *News and Courier*, December 21, 1874.

⁴⁶ *Acts, Special Session*, 1868, pp. 21, 22.

⁴⁷ *Reports and Resolutions*, 1873-1876.

ceivable.” These bonds, placed with the financial agent in New York, offering six per cent interest payable semi-annually, were made redeemable in twenty years. An annual tax was levied on the taxable property of the State sufficient to meet the interest on the loan authorized by the act.⁴⁸ The State debt was further augmented when at the regular session of 1868 an act was passed authorizing a loan for the relief of the treasury. By this measure there was to be borrowed on the credit of the State, on coupon bonds, within twelve months of the passage of the measure, a sum not exceeding \$1,000,000. The bonds, dating from January 1869, bearing interest at seven per cent, payable semi-annually, and to be redeemed at the option of the State within twenty years from the date of issue, were to be used as collateral security by the State financial agent, in New York, in accordance with the directions of the governor, attorney-general, the comptroller-general, and treasurer of the State.⁴⁹

Another measure of the sort authorized the State financial agent in New York to pledge such State bonds as he should have as collateral security for a State loan. The time wherein this loan and that to pay the interest on the public debt might be negotiated was extended to twenty-four months.⁵⁰ This was followed by a third measure which provided for the conversion of the State securities. By this act, the treasurer was required to issue stock of the State in exchange for coupon bonds of the State, or reverse the procedure, upon the application of any person holding either security in designated sums.⁵¹

Other financial measures of importance were enacted at the next legislature. Such an act provided for the payment of the interest on bonds and stocks of the State in coin. This measure was so framed as to include the “State House bonds” but to exclude those issued by the “war gov-

⁴⁸ *Acts*, 1868, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, pp. 182-183.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, pp. 258-259.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, p. 241.

ernment'' all the debts of which the Federal Government had declared null and void.⁵² Another measure provided for a Sinking Fund. There were designated as commissioners of this fund the governor, comptroller-general, attorney-general, and the chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate and Committee on Ways and Means of the House, respectively. These commissioners were authorized to sell such real and personal property, assets and effects of the State as were not in public use, or not prohibited, receive and manage the proceeds accruing from such sales, and utilize the fund thus created in discharging the indebtedness of the State.⁵³

The Sinking Fund measure, in the opinion of a correspondent of the *Daily Courier*, was a scheme for a gigantic swindle of State property. He declared the commissioners proposed to sell the State interest in the Greenville Railroad at ten cents on the dollar. It was also in their power "to sell and convey all the real or personal property of the State not devoted to educational or charitable purposes, at such times and upon such terms as they might deem most advantageous." Writing from Columbia, the correspondent of the *Courier* asserted that C. P. Leslie sponsored the bill which came up as a special order. Yet the public interests were not without protection. Intelligent Negro members such as Rainey, Swails, Lomax, and Cain attacked the measure, which, nevertheless, was passed in spite of their opposition.⁵⁴

The unfaithful administration of the Sinking Fund defeated whatever benefits that agency might have conferred upon the public. As a measure of protection to the public interests, therefore, the General Assembly required the attorney-general to institute legal action to recover the proceeds of State property sold by the commission and the State bonds purchased with moneys belonging to the Sinking Fund. There arose out of this action of the legislature

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1869-1870, p. 303.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1869-1870, pp. 388-389.

⁵⁴ *Courier*, January 31, 1870.

the suit against Niles G. Parker, former State Treasurer, who, convicted of the embezzlement of coupons belonging to the Sinking Fund Commission, was ordered to refund to the State \$75,000.⁵⁵

As a result of these various financial transactions some means of adjusting the State debt had to be devised. At the session of 1870-1871, a law was enacted to create a debt of the State, to be known as the Sterling Funded Debt, the same or the proceeds thereof to be used exclusively in exchange for or in payment of the existing public debt of the State. The act authorized to be borrowed on the credit of the State £1,200,000 sterling. The necessary arrangements were made to effect the loan and proper safeguards for its repayment were provided.⁵⁶

The measure was opposed from the outset by the press of the State, which insisted that in embodying the idea of cancelling a present debt by a new foreign loan, it was nevertheless "a new job."⁵⁷ The attack of the press centered not on the merits of the measure but rather on the lack of faith attributed to its sponsors. It was, therefore, proclaimed that the measure proposed to increase the State debt despite its declaration to the contrary. The merits of the law were never proved in that the measure was repealed, before becoming operative, on March 13, 1872.⁵⁸ Probably to calm the troubled waters disturbed by so many questionable transactions the legislature at its session of 1871-1872 submitted to the people for ratification a proposed amendment prohibiting the increase of the State debt except by a two-thirds vote of the qualified electors voting on the question. This measure became a part of the constitution in 1873.

Another one of such measures, known as the validating act, passed in 1871-1872. It declared to be legal and valid certain bonds issued in accordance with the authority and

⁵⁵ *Acts*, 1873-1874, p. 820; *Reports and Resolutions*, 1875-1876, p. 381.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1870-1871, pp. 616-617.

⁵⁷ *Courier*, March 1, 1871.

⁵⁸ *Acts*, 1871-1872.

provisions of specified acts of the General Assembly and mentioned in the annual report of the state treasurer under date of October 31, 1871. This measure encountered the all but militant opposition of the public since it made valid the bonds illegally issued by certain State officials, whose cupidity had reflected great discredit upon the moral integrity and financial prestige of the State Government.⁵⁹

To improve this ugly situation the legislature at the session of 1873-1874 enacted a law to reduce the volume of the public debt and provide for the payment of the same. This measure authorized payment of the acknowledged bonded debt of the State at fifty per cent of its face value. It repudiated the issue of conversion bonds amounting to \$5,965,000 as having been placed upon the market without the authority of law. The interest on the debt authorized to be paid was to be satisfied from the proceeds of an annual levy of two mills on the taxable property of the State. The enactment of this levy was to be endorsed on each bond or certificate of stock and sufficient safeguards were provided for the protection of creditors.⁶⁰

To assure the public of an honest administration of the State finances other steps were taken. At the legislative session of 1874-1875, there was passed an act requiring the state treasurer to publish in one Charleston and one Columbia newspaper monthly statements of his receipts and and expenditures.^{60a} At the same session the statute passed at that of 1869-1870,⁶¹ requiring the attorney-general and other officers to designate certain newspapers in which all legal notices should be published, was repealed. This action effected a considerable saving of State funds as attested by the high charges theretofore made by the publishing newspapers. A measure approved on March 16, 1874, required all public officers to turn over to their successors moneys officially in their hands.⁶²

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1871-1872, pp. 278-281.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1873-1874, pp. 518-523.

^{60a} *Ibid.*, 1874-1875, p. 864.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1869-1870, p. 351.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1874-1875, pp. 674-675.

Yet one of the most important measures passed during the session failed to become operative. This was a bill embodying three main points. The first was the appointment of a commission by the governor to audit claims against the State, empowered to reject any wholly or in part. The second provided for the reduction of all approved claims to one-half of the nominal value. The third proposed to pay the reduced claims in four equal installments. Such a measure was framed by the House, but amended by the Senate which named the commission. The action of the House in changing the commission was sustained by the Senate.⁶³ Governor Chamberlain vetoed the bill. He advanced as a reason the fraudulent character of the certificates for legislative expenses, especially in view of the general want of confidence in the commissioners named. These were W. B. Gulick, Thomas S. Cavender and J. P. Southern. R. B. Elliott ruled that the measure become law despite the Governor's veto, since he did not return it to the House wherein it originated within the constitutional limit of three days. The Supreme Court sustained this view, from which Governor Chamberlain threatened to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States.

In view of this situation the legislature passed at the session of 1875-1876 new measures embodying essentially the same principles. One of these new measures to provide for the payment of certain indebtedness of the State levied an annual tax of one mill for three years commencing November 1, 1875. This was referred to as the "Big Bonanza."⁶⁴ The other approved on the same date, December 24, 1875, was known as the "Little Bonanza." By this act which provided for the settlement and payment of certain claims against the State the governor was empowered to appoint three persons to constitute a commission on claims. This commission was authorized to audit as adjusted claims against the State those founded upon legislative pay certificates or state treasurer's due bills. The

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1874-1875.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1875-1876, pp. 16-20.

act authorized payment to the holders of these audited claims of one-half the face value, in four equal installments, the first payable from the taxes for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 1875. The sum to be certified and liquidated under this act was limited to \$500,000 to be raised by an annual levy of one-half of one mill on the taxable property of the State.⁶⁵

Numerous measures regulatory of State finances or officials handling State moneys were passed at the legislative session of 1875-1876. One required that all payments by the state treasurer except for interest on the public debt and the pay of members and employees of the General Assembly be made on warrants drawn by the comptroller-general.⁶⁶ Another required all persons authorized by law to disburse moneys to publish a monthly statement of their transactions.⁶⁷ A third measure prohibited county treasurers from charging a commission on school funds paid out by their approval. This was somewhat similar in nature to an act previously passed to prohibit county officers from dealing in teachers' and jurors' certificates.⁶⁸

The most important financial measures enacted during the reconstruction were those which levied taxes and made appropriations for supplies. As a basis for the tax levy, there was enacted, during the special session of 1868, a comprehensive measure providing for the assessment and taxation of property. It declared that all real and personal property in South Carolina, and personal property which resident owners kept, or used temporarily out of the State, with the intention of returning the same into the State, or which had been sent out for sale and not yet sold, were subject to taxation. All moneys and credits, investments in bonds, stocks, joint stock companies, or otherwise of residents in the State, were likewise taxable properties.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1875-1876, pp. 20-23.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 1875-1876, p. 91.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1875-1876.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 1875-1876, pp. 165-166.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1868, pp. 27-67.

The tax levy for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 1868, made in pursuance of this new law, provided that there be collected a sum not exceeding one million dollars.⁷⁰ The tax levy was in subsequent years pro-rated on the taxable property of the State on the basis of a designated number of mills to the dollar. In 1869-1870, the State levy was placed at 5 mills. The rate the next two years was 9 and 12 mills respectively, the latter rate being levied also in 1873-1874. Thereafter the tax rate decreased, being 10½ mills in 1874-1875 and 11 mills in 1875-1876. The county tax rate generally authorized was 3 mills, although different counties assessed property at a greater or lesser rate according to their particular needs.⁷¹

The advance of the tax rate to 12 mills in 1872-1873 may be accounted for in part by the failure of the general license law to produce the expected revenue. By this law, passed in 1871-1872, a graduated tax was laid on the proprietors of businesses and on occupations. Its enforcement was opposed from the outset by the people and press of the State. Assailed as discriminating against every class of occupation above that of laborer, and declared to be neither uniform nor equal, the press asserted its unconstitutionality.⁷² The citizens of Charleston, upon whom this tax would have heavily fallen, arose in an uproar. Yet this was found unnecessary, since the law approved on March 13, 1872, was repealed early in the session of 1872-1873.⁷³

Hence, there was no substantial difference in the principle of taxation as applied during and immediately following the reconstruction, although this was not strictly the case prior to the war. Taxes at that time were levied on the following: "Slaves, free Negroes, Sales of goods, wares, merchandize of residents and transients in the

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, pp. 237-239.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 1869-1876.

⁷² *Courier*, March 22, 1872.

⁷³ *Acts*, 1871-1872; 1872, 1873.

State, professions and faculties, lots in the towns and villages, lands, bank capital, insurance premiums, gas light stocks, and banking agencies of such corporations chartered in other States but doing business in South Carolina." Similarly the rate of taxation was increased as emergencies dictated. Free Negroes who paid \$2.00 each in 1857 were required to pay \$2.75 in 1858 and \$3.00 in 1860. The rate on slaves increased from 70 cents on a slave in 1857 to 95 cents in 1858, to \$1.26 in 1860. In the last mentioned year, moreover, all salaries and wages (those of army and navy officers and men excluded) in excess of \$500 were taxed \$1.00 on each \$100 of such excess.⁷⁴

Comparing the rates at which taxes were levied during and immediately after the reconstruction, one finds them generally greater during that period than later. The records show a high State rate of 12 mills, a low rate of 5, and an average rate of less than 10 mills, during the reconstruction, whereas the tax levy of 1877 was 7 mills, of 1878, 6½, and of 1880, 7 mills.⁷⁵ This includes the school tax of 2 mills levied in each county. Yet the generally higher levies of the reconstruction period, especially after a fair property assessment had been made, were not wholly indefensible. Despite the part that corruption may have exercised in these matters, the greater expenditures involved in the support of education and the construction and improvements of State penal and charitable institutions were not, in the main, unjustifiable. Furthermore, the purchasing power of money was less during the reconstruction than either before or immediately after. This circumstance increased not only the living costs of individuals, but was in part responsible for the higher cost of public administration. It was, therefore, a factor in augmenting the cost of operating the government of South Carolina.

These tables will further elucidate this point:

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 1857-1860.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1877-1880.

TAXATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR ⁷⁶

Year	Total General Taxes Levied	Amount Received from Slave Property
1850	\$330,609.82	\$204,111.60
1851	515,678.85	313,576.05
1852	349,931.28	208,526.64
1853	361,775.87	226,984.20
1854	429,975.99	229,560
1855	399,739.67	231,177.60
1856	532,744.41	290,488.50
1857	463,144.55	273,303.10
1858	465,518.39	273,534.80
1859	635,524.67	373,639.75
1860	632,433.91	366,404.55

VALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Fiscal Year	Valuation	State Tax Assessment
1868	\$168,434,533.98	\$1,028,696.98
1869	183,913,367.00	919,566.83
1870	113,809,007.16	1,024,281.09
1871	145,585,428.83	1,019,596.89
1872	167,481,092.67	2,089,495.00
1873	168,427,787.37	2,084,537.93
1874	145,143,023.00	1,555,201.68
1875	134,514,666	1,555,596.88
1877	135,284,046	725,156.86
1878	129,314,737	422,367.66
1879	123,019,000	628,710.73
1881	136,487,362	659,099.89
1883	150,609,304	779,298.74
1884	149,727,609	841,526.31
1885	144,501,184	771,838.59
1886	141,070,347	607,937.55

From 1868 to 1876 the State tax assessment included the tax levy for school purposes. After 1876, however, the State tax levy did not include the levy for school purposes which was raised by levying a tax of two mills on the taxable property of each county.⁷⁷

The following tables will throw further light on the actual situation in South Carolina as compared with similar conditions in other States.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ South Carolina Journals and Documents, 1850-1860.

⁷⁷ *Reports and Resolutions*, 1868-1876; 1877-1887.

⁷⁸ These tables were taken from a statistical report in the *Nation*, XIV, 198-199, and verified by reference to the records of the United States Census.

WEALTH, DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE WHOLE NUMBER OF INHABITANTS

1. New York.....	\$1,483.27	20. Oregon	\$567.06
2. Massachusetts	1,463.03	21. Nebraska	563.26
3. Connecticut	1,441.30	22. Maine	555.35
4. Rhode Island.....	1,366.28	23. Minnesota	520.60
5. California	1,140.15	24. Kansas	518.36
6. Pennsylvania	1,081.31	25. Kentucky	457.46
7. New Jersey.....	1,038.49	26. Louisiana	444.51
8. Ohio	838.73	27. West Virginia.....	431.32
9. Illinois	835.34	28. Tennessee	395.89
10. Maryland	824.37	29. Virginia	334.31
11. New Hampshire.....	793.66	30. Arkansas	322.81
12. Delaware	777.35	31. South Carolina.....	294.99
13. Indiana	754.58	32. Mississippi	252.67
14. Missouri	746.48	33. North Carolina.....	243.39
15. Nevada	732.72	34. Florida	235.23
16. Vermont	711.99	35. Georgia	226.47
17. Wisconsin	665.90	36. Alabama	202.46
18. Michigan	607.41	37. Texas	194.30
19. Iowa	601.03		

RATE OF TAXATION (PER THOUSAND DOLLARS)

1. Nevada	\$26.34	20. Maryland	\$10.30
2. Louisiana	21.85	21. Illinois	10.28
3. Arkansas	18.33	22. Georgia	9.79
4. Mississippi	17.86	23. Kentucky	9.48
5. Maine	15.36	24. West Virginia.....	9.03
6. Nebraska	14.83	25. North Carolina.....	9.02
7. Alabama	14.77	26. Indiana	8.51
8. Kansas	14.15	27. New Jersey.....	7.88
9. South Carolina.....	13.30	28. Connecticut	7.83
10. New Hampshire.....	12.88	29. Wisconsin	7.67
11. Iowa	12.62	30. Michigan	7.52
12. California	12.23	31. New York.....	7.47
13. Massachusetts	11.68	32. Rhode Island.....	7.31
14. Minnesota	11.57	33. Texas	7.10
15. Oregon	11.26	34. Tennessee	6.79
16. Virginia	11.26	35. Vermont	6.57
17. Florida	11.23	36. Pennsylvania	6.44
18. Missouri	10.82	37. Delaware	4.30
19. Ohio	10.52		

RATE OF TAXATION (PER HEAD)

1. Nevada	\$19.30	20. Oregon	\$6.39
2. Massachusetts	17.10	21. Minnesota	6.02
3. California	13.95	22. Arkansas	5.91
4. Connecticut	11.28	23. Wisconsin	5.10
5. New York.....	11.07	24. Vermont	4.68
6. New Hampshire.....	10.22	25. Michigan	4.57
7. Rhode Island.....	9.98	26. Mississippi	4.51
8. Louisiana	9.71	27. Kentucky	4.34
9. Ohio	8.83	28. South Carolina.....	3.92
10. Illinois	8.59	29. West Virginia.....	3.89
11. Maine	8.53	30. Virginia	3.76
12. Maryland	8.49	31. Delaware	3.34
13. Nebraska	8.35	32. Alabama	2.99
14. New Jersey.....	8.18	33. Tennessee	2.69
15. Missouri	8.08	34. Florida	2.64
16. Iowa	7.58	35. Georgia	2.21
17. Kansas	7.33	36. North Carolina.....	2.20
18. Pennsylvania	6.96	37. Texas	1.38
19. Indiana	6.42		

RATIO OF PUBLIC DEBT TO POPULATION

1. Louisiana	\$73.03	20. Nebraska	\$16.98
2. Massachusetts	47.49	21. Illinois	16.61
3. Nevada	46.74	22. Kentucky	14.34
4. Virginia	45.64	23. Alabama	13.31
5. Tennessee	38.80	24. Florida	11.64
6. Maryland	37.18	25. Vermont	10.87
7. New York.....	36.46	26. Arkansas	8.57
8. New Hampshire.....	35.04	27. Ohio	8.34
9. California	32.29	28. Iowa	6.73
10. Connecticut	31.79	29. Minnesota	6.34
11. North Carolina.....	30.31	30. Michigan	5.68
12. Rhode Island.....	27.32	31. Wisconsin	5.60
13. Missouri	27.25	32. Indiana	4.65
14. Maine	26.52	33. Delaware	4.21
15. Pennsylvania	25.27	34. Mississippi	3.13
16. New Jersey.....	25.22	35. Oregon	2.40
17. South Carolina.....	18.53	36. Texas	1.97
18. Georgia	18.37	37. West Virginia.....	1.27
19. Kansas	17.68		

The rate of taxation, of course, closely connected with appropriations. The first appropriation act passed by the reconstruction government in 1868 provided for the mileage and pay of the members of the General Assembly and

the salaries of the subordinate officers and attachés of that body. This measure required that each member of the legislature be furnished with a pay certificate signed by the presiding officer of the house in which he served. The subordinate officers and employees were to be furnished with pay certificates signed in like manner, but not to include the payment of mileage. The certificates were to be made out in accordance with pay and mileage established by the new State constitution and paid in bills receivable of the State properly pro-rated. The state treasurer was required to pay these evidences of indebtedness and retain the certificates as receipts showing that such payment had been made.⁷⁹

The appropriations made at the special session of 1868 were less typical of the period than those made in 1868-1869. The appropriations of this session provided for the supplies of the fiscal year, beginning November 1, 1868, and for the expenses of the General Assembly. For the latter \$140,000 was appropriated. However, the distributions of moneys for supplies varied greatly. There was required for the salaries of State officials \$119,300; for the State Police \$10,000; and for the Judiciary \$3,000, exclusive of salaries. The appropriation for public education amounted to \$76,800, for the military department \$20,000, and for the commission to codify the statute \$10,500 in salaries. Other appropriations included \$38,200 as contingent funds of the executive department, \$218,500 for ordinary civil expenses, and \$500,000 to pay the interest on the State debt. These appropriations differed from those of later sessions mainly in that the latter often authorized large payments for printing and miscellaneous purposes and designated larger sums for the support of education and State institutions.⁸⁰

Just as the reconstruction tax levies were, in the main, higher than those of the years immediately following, so the appropriations exceeded those of the pre-war and post-reconstruction periods. The appropriations for the fiscal

⁷⁹ *Acts, Special Session, 1868*, pp. 106-107.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1868-1876.

year beginning October 1, 1857, were less than \$500,000. Likewise those for the fiscal years beginning November 1, 1878, and of the same date, 1880, were less than \$850,000 and \$800,000, respectively. Yet the appropriations for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 1872, without designating a specific amount to meet the interest on the public debt, exceeded the sum of \$1,180,000. This, however, was not the lowest fiscal appropriation of the reconstruction, since the supply bill of 1875 appropriated less than \$900,000.⁸¹ Yet these reconstruction appropriations, although larger than others, are not conclusive evidences of corruption or uneconomical administration; they constitute in part a reflection of the changing needs of the time.

⁸¹ *Acts*, 1857; 1872-1873; 1875-1876; 1877-1878; 1880.

CHAPTER X

OPPOSITION TO THE RECONSTRUCTION

The measures of the reconstructionists easily displeased the native whites for the reason that the Negro was too much of a factor in the government. Despite the general protest against Negro supremacy, however, there were entertained among the opposition different points of view on the matter. A few highly respected Southerners like Orr sympathized with the reconstructionists in their imperfection and cooperated officially with them. There were those like Wade Hampton, who, forced by the logic of the events to a new liberality, urged a compromise with the Negroes whereby suffrage should be extended subject to property and intelligence qualifications.

A third group, represented by B. F. Perry, denounced the so-called "Negro rule" on the ground that the blacks, being inferior to the whites, should never be permitted by the power of either laws or votes to rule the latter. Men of this type, while not exactly arrayed against the laws themselves, nevertheless connected with and served as leaders of the rifle and sabre clubs composed of the aristocracy ruined by the war. Prevented by their poverty from acquiring an education and reduced to menial pursuits, the large majority of the members of these clubs had sunk low down beyond "all moral influences strong enough to affect the sense of their wrongs. Young, active, uneducated, disliking regular business habits, mindful of their fine descent, and now impoverished families, they refused to recognize the Negro—a part of their inheritance that was wrested from them—as their peer."¹

Then there were the lowest of all classes, commonly known as "the poor whites, who rivaled the Negro in ignorance but surpassed him in vice and cunning."² These

¹ *International Review*, Vol. VIII, 113.

² *Ibid.*, 112-113.

numbered about 150,000, residing largely in the upper counties, where the Negroes were in the minority. These poor whites could be relied upon to do almost anything that their leaders of influence might induce them to undertake.

The active opposition of the whites to the reconstructionists was expressed in various public declarations of the Democratic party. The State convention of that party recognized the Negro as an integral part of the body politic; but evidently fearing that such recognition might alienate some of the whites, the organization submitted in 1868, "An Address to the Colored People," informing the Negroes that they could never rule the white man, and asserting that their leaders desired only offices and salaries. The rule of the Negro was declared inimical to enterprise in the State, since no capitalist would entrust his funds to a government so controlled. The Democrats were prepared neither to make promises nor to propose compromises; they were forced to await the course of events. Yet, since the power of the Negro was temporary, they urged him to relinquish it immediately, forsake his wicked leaders, and win the friendship rather than the enmity of the white people of South Carolina.³ The Democrats of Charleston also addressed the Negroes of that city in the interest of the impending fall elections of 1868.⁴ The Negroes resented the attempt to direct their exercise of suffrage, reviewed the reactionary measures enacted by the legislature in 1865, recalled the opposition of that party to the reconstruction measures of Congress, recited the refusal of the group to cooperate with the Negroes in establishing a State government, and expressed doubt of the sincerity of the present profession of friendship.⁵

The thinking whites, however, soon saw the folly of open opposition. They were hopelessly outnumbered by Negroes under the protection of the United States. The best they could do just after the inauguration of the reconstruction

³ *Courier*, April 6, 1868.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 26, 1868.

⁵ *New York Tribune*, September 8, 1868.

government was to protest against certain laws and to warn the Negroes as to the significance of measures which would work out to their own detriment.

This opposition was, in the main, feeble at the beginning of the reconstruction. New leaders did not quickly appear to take the places of those who, having plunged the State into a disastrous war of rebellion, had little influence among the whites. These leaders, however, stirred up a little enthusiasm for the Seymour and Blair ticket in 1868. The policy of President Johnson inspired them with some hope, but his inglorious failure quickly brought despair. Democratic conventions were held, although nominations of State officers were not regularly made. The machine all but went to pieces between 1868 and 1876, except so far as there held together the unreconstructed element that expressed itself from time to time at assemblies held supposedly to promote agriculture and immigration. To those whites who encouraged the organization of aggressive opposition the majority of the whites said, "You have misled us once; we will be more prudent in the future."⁶

To this course there was one striking exception. As in most Southern States, there developed among the irresponsible and shiftless whites a tendency toward vagabondage which soon resulted in the formation of bands of marauders, who terrorized Negroes, attacked Union soldiers, and antagonized Northern adventurers. These agents of disorder gained influence in the proportion as the reconstructionists gave rise to more or less dissatisfaction. They easily connected with or developed into the Ku Klux Klan, which, according to Edward King,⁷ was operating in the State as early as 1868.

The Ku Klux Klan organized as a hooded order, excluding persons of color, pledged its members to secrecy, and declared itself justified on the grounds of "justice, humanity and constitutional liberty" in the perpetration of its lawless acts. Protected by these safeguards, the Klansmen

⁶ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 180.

⁷ *Scribners*, VIII, 152.

protested the reconstruction rule by whipping and otherwise intimidating inoffensive Negroes and white men solely because of their political affiliations. Often these agents of disorder resorted to arson and murder. This protest by violence so increased, with the progress of time, as to make necessary various defensive efforts of the State for the protection of life and property, especially in certain upper counties. These outrages were committed here and there, but no one could account for the criminals.

Such numerous offenses included the murder of B. F. Randolph, a Negro leader and Senator from Orangeburg; of James Martin, a Republican legislator from Abbeville, and of such inoffensive freedmen as Tabby Simpson at Laurenceville and Johnson Glascoe at Newberry. The evidence taken in connection with these murders, all of which occurred prior to October 20, 1868, established clearly as the motive the political intimidation of the Negroes. The intelligent white press denounced such outrages, but usually supported the efforts of the whites in the troublous districts in trying to show that the reports of these outbreaks were being exaggerated for political purposes. So many of these political murders were committed that the reconstructionists enacted at the special session of the legislature in 1868 a measure to establish a State Police for protection against these enemies of the public welfare.⁸ At the same session of the legislature passed another act to empower the governor of the State to call out the militia, to take possession of the telegraph lines and railroads, and if, in his judgment, the public safety required, to suspend the writ of habeas corpus throughout the State or in any part thereof.⁹ Against this measure the majority of the whites in the State, especially B. F. Perry and the State press headed by the *Courier*, strenuously protested.

Other measures of this character were passed at the session of 1868-1869. Such was a measure to organize and govern the militia of the State. This act forbade the or-

⁸ *Acts, Special Session, 1868, 14.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

ganizing, drilling or parading of any other armed bodies in the State. By this act, moreover, all able-bodied male citizens in the State between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years, except those exempted by the laws of the United States and those excepted for other reasons, were declared eligible to become militiamen.¹⁰ Another measure authorized the governor to employ armed force to preserve the peace. He was authorized also to purchase two thousand stands of arms of the most improved pattern with the usual complement of ammunition.¹¹

This legislation, however, tended to make bad matters worse. The very sight of the Negro in military uniform enraged the native whites¹² to the extent that the Negro militiamen were targets for the lawless element even when such Negroes were peacefully inactive. The State press bitterly condemned all of these measures¹³ because they seemed to violate the constitutional principle of maintaining a standing army in time of peace. The *News* believed that the cause of the trouble should be removed by silencing the Union Leagues and Loyal Leagues, to which Negroes were bound by oath as slaves.¹⁴

Unfortunately, too, the Negro militia was not wisely handled. Under Joe Crews, the white Lieutenant Colonel, the militiamen did so much parading and unnecessary talking about how they intended to keep order and they made so many arrests¹⁵ that the whites organized in opposition. Taking advantage of this bill permitting the governor to accept or refuse companies of the militia voluntarily organized, the whites promptly formed units of their own, as they would not join the regular militia under Negro officers; but the governor would not grant such companies official recognition and later ordered them to disband. The whites, however, were far from their extremity. They then fell

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1868-1869, 215-216.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 284-293.

¹² *Courier*, December 2, 1870.

¹³ *Ibid.*, April 2 and May 12, 1869.

¹⁴ *News*, January 11, 1869.

¹⁵ *Courier*, December 19, 1870, and May 8, 1871.

back on the revival and expansion of rifle clubs, which were afforded sufficient military instruction by the frequent feasts and target practices which multiplied.¹⁶

Disorders then became frequent. Individual attacks and murders of Negroes and their sympathizers became so widespread that the best the conservative press could do was to insist that they were exaggerated or to excuse those which were so evident as to be incontrovertible. The *Courier* of September 27, 1869, reported the shooting of a Negro constable undertaking to make an arrest at Hamburg. On November 22, 1869, the *News* carried an account of the killing of a Negro at Greenwood in Abbeville. The rabid whites justified the acts of the Ku Klux Klan on the ground of the right of revolution.¹⁷ In some such way Wade Perrin, Henry Nash, and Volney Powell lost their lives, and so passed George Dill, and another named Nance.¹⁸ In the upper counties it became an easy matter, then, to get together sufficient well-drilled white men to overcome the ill-drilled Negro militiamen. In some cases the Negro militiamen were attacked in open battle and annihilated. In other cases they were imprisoned on false charges to give the agents of disorder the opportunity to take them out at night and shoot them down in cold blood.

The situation was alarming at times. As early as October, 1868, Governor Scott proclaimed that the laws of the State were being violated and set at defiance in ten counties of the State, including Edgefield, Abbeville, and Anderson. In 1870 and 1871 there was a demand for martial law, but the Governor thought that the best way out of an ugly situation was by peaceful negotiation with the dissatisfied elements and by secret service through the office of the attorney-general.¹⁹ For this he was denounced by Negro members of the legislature, since they wanted more militia-

¹⁶ See accounts of these Assemblies in the *Courier*.

¹⁷ *Columbia Daily Union*, January 3, 1872, quoting a letter published in the *New York Tribune*.

¹⁸ *Courier*, February 10 and 16, 1870; Wade Hampton, Address to the People of South Carolina.

¹⁹ *Courier*, January 17, 1871.

men to enable the State to take drastic measures.²⁰ Others demanded the abolition of the militia, insisting that it was an expensive nuisance.²¹

One of the causes of the increase in the number of these outrages was that the opposition, based at first on race prejudice, had become fortified with the charge that the administration of Governor R. K. Scott was thoroughly corrupt. The legislature, it was said, had become dominated by a group of tricksters who could do almost any questionable thing ostensibly in the interest of the public welfare. "No bills except of a purely legal character," says a South Carolinian, "could pass without bribery and by bribery almost any bill could be passed. A formidable lobby sprang up and presently organized depredations were commenced on the public."²² The Land Commission established to settle the poor upon small farms was easily drawn into corruption when charged with administering funds raised by the issuance of \$700,000 worth of State bonds; the Phosphate Act of 1870 was manipulated in the interests of the few who exploited the public; funds of the militia were diverted to private use; the Sinking Fund Act was another opportunity to steal State property; millions of dollars were unconstitutionally added to the State debt by making the State collaterally or absolutely responsible for the debts of railroads; the State institutions were robbed; bonds were issued without authority; education, although provided for in the laws, was neglected; the officers and employers of the State were increased to make raids upon the treasury through iniquitous "pay certificates"; sessions of the legislature were prolonged to increase the members' pay; and finally property was assessed sufficiently high to raise the required funds for these purposes at a high rate of taxation.

The whole State, according to the press, tended to become poisoned throughout with the virus of corruption. Most of the local county officials appointed by the Governor

²⁰ *Ibid.*, January 11, 1871.

²¹ *Ibid.*, December 14 and 16, 1870.

²² *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 178.

turned out to be dishonest. Sheriffs, treasurers, and commissioners cooperated in misappropriating public funds; and trial justices exacted exorbitant fees for numerous petty offenses, but turned over to the State very little of the funds thus collected.²³ County treasurers, required by law to send the state treasurer all State monies collected, would use such funds to pay State claims and turn this paper over to the state treasurer. This continued until Cardoza, the Negro State Treasurer, put an end to this in 1873, when he instituted proceedings against James M. Allen, the Treasurer of Greenville.²⁴

Corruption, then, furnished the battle-cry of the campaign of 1870, when Scott was seeking reelection. The *Courier* said: "Regarding the coming political contests, the true policy is for the honest men of the State, without regard to political antecedents, or race or color to form in serried columns and throw themselves upon, and not into the ranks of the enemy."²⁵ Many Negroes heeded this call. Prominent among them was R. H. Cain, the spokesman of the Negro reform movement. Observing these undesirable tendencies, he had called upon his people to elect honest men; for those who had leaped into office by fraud and corruption were a handicap to the State. Striking at the "carpet-baggers," he said in his paper, the *Missionary Herald*: "We would favor sending to the Legislature honest mechanics and farmers whose minds are not biased by political chicanery; at any rate let us have honest men who are identified with the country's prosperity and the people's interest."²⁶

There followed, then, a rift between honest Negroes and white corruptionists supported by venal blacks. The white adventurers desired the Negro in just a few offices to keep

²³ *Courier*, November 24, December 6, 1870.

²⁴ So many of these were finally indicted and convicted that the *News and Courier* carried a tabulated statistical statement for the convenience of the reader. (*News*, October 18, 1869; *News and Courier*, May 8, 11, 20, 22, 26; June 2, 3, 8, 15; September 24, 1874.)

²⁵ *Courier*, May 4, 1870.

²⁶ *News*, May 26, 1869.

the masses sufficiently satisfied to be content with keeping them in power for plundering the State.²⁷ Negroes represented by R. H. Cain, however, were too intelligent to accept such a policy. Referring also to national matters, he urged the Negroes to send to Congress true representatives. Belaboring the gentlemen thus serving the State in 1869, he said: "These long, lank, sharp-nosed gents may prepare for defeat. . . . The colored people have been sold often enough. . . . We venture to say that no one of these pretending scamps will ever go to misrepresent them again."²⁸

As a member of the legislature in 1870, R. H. Cain became very active in the struggle for reform. He fearlessly opposed the bill to give possession of State owned stock in aided enterprises to a board of commissioners. Commending him for his stand, the *Courier* correspondent said: "Be this as it may, there are some men in the Legislature, even in the Radical rank, who are fighting and will continue to fight every measure that savors of corruption. Perhaps they are constitutionally honest, or it may be they 'snuff the battle afar off,' and foresee the day of retribution. Give them their due, however, for it is this class of men on whom the people must rely for a conscientious discharge of public duty, and who above all others will be returned to the Legislature in the next election by their colored constituents. Among these men are Rainey of Georgetown, Swails of Williamsburg, and Lomax of Abbeville. R. H. Cain, or Daddy Cain, as he is generally known, is another one bold enough to fight for any measure that promises public good, without asking whether it originated with a Democrat or Republican. In fact, there is more real conservatism among intelligent Negroes than among the white Radicals, and it is due to the reaction caused by the extremes into which the party was rushed last year. They have begun to realize that simply because they have the power to do certain things which secure present advantage, it is not wise to exert it in behalf of a faction. And they

²⁷ *Courier*, February 17 and November 23, 1870.

²⁸ *News*, September 29, 1869.

are already forming a nucleus that is gathering strength every day in both houses and making its influence felt in even the precincts of the Executive office.”^{28a}

These efforts were endorsed by the leading Democrats and intelligent Negroes, including many who recently had been politically inactive. They were supported by disaffected Republicans, and boldly sponsored by the State press, all of which resulted in a movement to organize along non-partisan lines the Union Reform party of 1870. The party selected as candidates to oppose the reelection of Governor Scott, Judge R. B. Carpenter, a Republican, for governor, and General M. C. Butler, a Democrat, for lieutenant-governor. Besides, accepting the fifteenth amendment and the reconstruction measures of Congress as “verities,” the platform attacked the expenditures of the reorganized government as excessive, and declared the reduction of these expenditures and of taxation to be the cardinal principle of the party. It was to be the purpose of the party, therefore, to replace “the present corrupt government with competent men of known integrity and honor” and also to overcome “the absolute and sharp antagonism between the races.”²⁹

During the ensuing campaign, the Union Reform party made special appeals for Negro support by means of the press and representative speakers of both races. Besides the numerous Democratic leaders who addressed the Negroes from time to time, Jonas Byrd, “a respectable Negro of Charleston,” rendered much service among them in the interest of the reform movement. Although he had declined the party’s nomination for lieutenant-governor, Byrd was, nevertheless, a “bold, honest” supporter of the ticket. He traveled throughout the State, especially in such counties as Edgefield and Laurens, denouncing the corrupt rule of Scott, Chamberlain, Parker, and Neagle, who were supported by the Republican majority comprised principally of Negro voters. He urged the Negroes to for-

^{28a} *Courier*, Jan. 31, 1878.

²⁹ Quoted in the *Courier*, June 17, July 9, 1870.

sake these false leaders and support the true, those who, formerly their oppressors, were nevertheless, at this time, their best friends.³⁰ In addition to Byrd, many other Negroes took an active part in this campaign in the interest of clean government. These included such "substantial citizens of Charleston" as Aaron Harper, Stephney Riley, W. E. Marshall, Joseph Edmonston, and W. Sneed.³¹ Robert Maxson of Barnwell, W. Ford, and Adam Jackson, "one of the most influential colored preachers of St. James Santee Parish," also worked in the interest of reform.³²

In the meanwhile the regular Republicans were actively engaged in soliciting the continued support of the Negroes. A. J. Ransier, a member of that race, was nominated for the office of lieutenant-governor. The promises of the former masters of political and civil equality were ridiculed as untrustworthy and the freedmen were told to vote the Republican ticket as evidence of their desire to remain a free people.³³ These efforts were strengthened by the accession of former Governor James L. Orr to the Republican party. Orr declared his new allegiance on the practical grounds that the normal Republican majority of 25,000 doomed the reform party's efforts to defeat. Reform must come from within Republican ranks. Thus those who had at heart the interest of the State should join the dominant party, become the intelligent leaders of the Negroes, win the confidence of the people, expose corruption, and exercise their influence to bring about reform. At that time this step could be more easily taken by a Democrat, without sacrificing any principles, Orr contended, since all the old issues of the United States Bank, internal improvements, and the like, were dead. Orr informed the whites that they should have thus cooperated with the Negroes in 1868 instead of censuring them for becoming Re-

³⁰ Quoted in the *Courier* of August 5, 1870; taken from the *Edgefield Advertiser, Courier*, August 9, 1870.

³¹ *Courier*, August 4, 1870.

³² *Ibid.*, August 13, 1870.

³³ *Ibid.*, August 17, 1870.

publicans, a thing for which he believed they should not have been blamed. "Suppose one hundred of the most intelligent white citizens of each county had gone, in good faith, and with frank sincerity, into the Republican organization," said Orr, "can it be doubted that their intelligence and moral strength would have secured honest nominees?"³⁴ General M. C. Butler, the candidate for lieutenant-governor on the reform ticket, admitted on the stump that in not doing this very thing the whites made a serious mistake. The reconstructionists, moreover, Orr thought, had done some good. They had to their credit the Homestead Act securing a man's castle against claims of heartless creditors, the protection of citizens from paying debts contracted for slave property, the abolition of imprisonment for debt, and the increase of the market value of South Carolina bonds from twenty-six cents to ninety cents.

The election resulted in an overwhelming victory for the regular Republicans. Scott was reelected over Carpenter by a vote of 85,071 to 51,573. The failure of the reform movement was attributed to fraud and force used by the Republicans. The manipulation of the election law of 1870, and the use of the State militia, the press held, could not be overcome by the reform party. Nevertheless, so many Negroes heartily supported the reform movement that the *Courier* in commending them therefor said: "They had the courage to assert their freedom and their right to their own vote. And in this they have proved that they are not unmindful of their obligations as citizens, and that they desire the real welfare of the State to which they owe their allegiance."³⁵ The large majority of the Negroes, however, voted with the Republicans for the reason that they had become attached to that party because it had shown itself friendly to their interests, and the very conservatives who were then seeking their aid to reform the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, August 17, 1870.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1870.

State government had refused to cooperate with them in 1868.

This campaign had an unfavorable effect. The opposition had so fearlessly denounced those in power that many lawless whites were encouraged to believe that the administration would be overthrown. Having been disappointed, this element undertook to do whatever it could to get rid of the reconstructionists by foul means. Union and Spartanburg were reported as all but insurrectionary in 1870. There were troubles brewing in Yorkville about the same time as a result of the parading of the Negro militia without hostile intent.³⁶

The most atrocious of these arose from the killing of Matt Stevens, a former Confederate soldier, by some Negro militiamen to whom he refused to give whiskey. As a result, thirteen Negroes, members of the militia, were lodged in the jail of Union County. On January 4, 1871, five of these men were taken from prison by a hooded mob, and two were murdered. The three who escaped were nevertheless shot. In consequence of rumors that the eight men remaining might obtain their freedom, the Klansmen returned to the jail eight days later, took them out and shot them to death. The evidence taken in connection with the outrage tended to show, by the systematic order and cleverly executed program of the perpetrators, that this crime was committed by well-known old citizens. For the commission of such crimes, the "atrocious conduct of the Negro militia," the "general demeanor of the Negroes who were reported to have regarded themselves the equals of the whites," and "the contempt in which citizens held the corrupt and ignorant men who controlled the State Government" were advanced as explanatory reasons. Yet a correspondent of the *New York Tribune* seemed to have found the real reason in the conversation of native whites. These satisfied him that the chief purpose of these outrages was "to intimidate the blacks so that at the next election they

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1871.

would not dare to vote for any of their own race for office or for any white radical.”³⁷

And the outrages continued. A Negro County Commissioner, Henry Nash, was killed at Cokesburg in February, 1871, and the assembling of members of his race to avenge his death threatened an unusual clash, for they were dispersed with much difficulty.³⁸ According to the *Kings-tree Star* two Negroes were lynched about the same time in Williamsburg.³⁹ Then followed what the conservative whites themselves called an outrageous attack on Negroes in Chester. A Negro's home was attacked and certain whites assisted him in repelling the band. The Negroes then assembled in such numbers as to terrify even conservative men who apparently acquiesced in a general massacre resulting in killing as many as seven at one attack and others as the slaughter continued.⁴⁰

On May 23, 1871, the *Courier* carried the account of an organized effort of the Ku Klux Klan to drive all Republicans out of office in the upper counties, as evidenced by their forcing the resignation of Justice O'Connell, a highly respected man. Darlington was thus disturbed about the same time.⁴¹ On August 12, 1871, the *Courier* reported the murder of a Negro by desperados in Blackville because he threatened to kill the whites from the cradle up to the cross. In September, there was a Ku Klux Klan raid at Orangeburg which the *Courier* attributed to the work of the Union League and the corruption of Republican officials.⁴² In fact, the situation had become so terrible that members of the legislature like June Mobley, according to the Columbia correspondent of the *Courier*, were afraid to return to their homes in 1871, because they had inveighed

³⁷ From the *New York Tribune*, April 28, 1871; quoted in the *Courier*, May 2, 1871.

³⁸ *Courier*, Feb. 16, 1871.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1871.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, March 7, 10, 15, 16, 27, 1871.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, May 23, 24, 1871.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1871.

against the Ku Klux Klan and had demanded a declaration of martial law.⁴³

The Negroes, however, were not idle. They sometimes rallied in large numbers; but, except in a few cases of having ample support of the local officers, they were usually overpowered. Here and there, moreover, some outrages were charged to them. The *Courier* of June 26, 1871, reported that there was on foot the organization of a Negro Ku Klux Klan near Spartanburg. Furthermore, when the Negroes were unable to fight openly they applied the torch, destroying a considerable amount of property.⁴⁴

As the State authorities could not restore order, help from the outside was sought. At the session of 1870-1871 the legislature appointed Whipper, Wilkes, and Knuckles as a committee to lay the affairs of South Carolina before President Grant.⁴⁵ At this same session the legislature requested the governor to secure Federal intervention to suppress the Ku Klux Klan activities.⁴⁶ This General Assembly, too, enacted a measure to provide for the protection of persons, property, and the public peace, prohibited ejection from rented houses or discharge from employment on account of political opinions, made the banding together or conspiring against persons a felony, authorized persons injured in a riot to recover damages from the county, and required sheriffs and other officers to proceed against offenders and execute warrants.⁴⁷ As an aftermath of the conditions leading to this legislation, the General Assembly at its next regular session required those counties in which the writ of habeas corpus had been suspended by the President of the United States to pay to the widows and orphans of persons killed because of their political opinions the sum of ten dollars a month to the widow and six dollars to each orphan under the age of fifteen years. These funds

⁴³ *Ibid.*, March 3, 1871; Jan. 9, 1871.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, March 15, 16, 17, 1871.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1871.

⁴⁶ *Acts*, 1870-1871.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 559-563.

were to be raised by the levy of a tax of one mill on each dollar's worth of taxable property in the county.⁴⁸

The Federal government had already enacted defensive measures to protect the States. The act to enforce the rights of citizens of the United States to vote in the several States of the Union was approved May 30, 1870; and the act to enforce the Fourteenth Amendment was approved on April 20, 1871. These measures prohibited the activities of a person or persons designed to interfere in any way with a citizen's exercise of the suffrage, forbade the banding together of persons, or their going on the public highways in disguise with the intent to interfere with one's exercise of the suffrage, and empowered the president to suspend the writ of "habeas corpus" in any area declared in a state of rebellion.

On March 24, 1871, the President, responding to representations from Governor Scott, issued a proclamation commanding persons composing unlawful combinations disturbing the public peace to disband and retire within twenty days. On April 20, 1871, a Congressional committee of investigation, authorized by a concurrent resolution to inquire into the condition of the late insurrectionary States, commenced work in Washington. On June 29th, a sub-committee of three visited South Carolina. In the meanwhile, ineffective efforts of certain county officials to bring criminals to justice intensified the situation. Thus on October 12, 1871, the President issued a proclamation setting forth the existence of unlawful combinations and conspiracies in the State of South Carolina against certain persons and commanding them to disperse in five days. This was followed on March 17, 1871, by a declaration of martial law which eventually extended over the counties of York, Spartanburg, Newberry, Laurens, Lancaster, Fairfield, Chester, Chesterfield, and Union. As a result there followed the Ku Klux Klan trials at Columbia in 1871-1872. Many offenders confessed their guilt; others stoutly defended themselves against charges of participation in acts

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1871-1872, 207.

of violence; but numerous individuals were convicted and punished.

The attitude of the liberal wing of the Democratic party toward the commission of violence by their party associates was justly a matter of grave concern to the Negroes. Thus much interest attached to the report of the Taxpayers' committee of investigation on the violence charged to certain districts of the State in May 1871. This committee reported that "violence had prevailed in several counties"; "that bad government, corruption in high places, set the example of moral decadence and disregard of law;" "larcenies and incendiarism practiced by ignorant, deluded and bad men, suggested in many instances and encouraged by a class much worse and more responsible were the actual initial causes of the first cases of violence.

"Later," continued the report, "there followed instances of corporal punishments and homicides, perpetrated by unknown persons upon citizens and even upon a few officials of the government who seemed to have become obnoxious to many in the communities wherein they lived, on account of supposed injustice, fraud and oppression." "The effectual remedy for these evils," the report continued, "will be found in good-government—the removal of all dishonest, incompetent, and bad men from office; and the appointment thereto of men (no matter what party) who are honest and competent and who feel the obligations which official station should impose and who will promptly and faithfully execute the laws."⁴⁹

Likewise the daily press at first denied, then practically defended the activities of the Ku Klux. In this connection, the comment of the *Courier* on the Ku Klux trials is interesting. Affirming that the law under which these trials would take place was unconstitutional, the *Courier* said: "The Ku Klux Committee has been unable in spite of every effort which it has made, to fasten any responsibility upon our people, and it is now hoped that the trials in the courts will accomplish at least so far as their party neces-

⁴⁹ *Proceedings, Taxpayers' Convention, 1871, 62-63.*

sities are concerned, the desired result. It is because we know this to be the object of the Radicals, as well as because we believe the liberty of the people of the United States in danger, that we are rejoiced that our people have employed counsel, not to screen any criminal from justice, but to defend the constitutional rights of the citizen, and to vindicate the character of the people of the State of South Carolina who never will be found advocating or sustaining lawlessness or crime.”⁵⁰

The failure of the liberal Democrats to rebuke the lawlessness of their party associates and the refusal of Democratic officials to convict partisans of crime committed against Negroes and radical whites prevented any considerable cleavage between the mass of Negroes and the Republican party. Indeed, so far from accomplishing their purpose, the action of the Democrats compelled the continued allegiance of the Negroes to the Republican party. This was the logical course for the Negroes since the Republicans had afforded them such protection as they had received.

After the election of 1870 the State press redoubled its attack on corrupt government. The *Courier* declared that the taxes then imposed on real estate and other property amounted to its virtual confiscation.⁵¹ It urged that the citizens take some steps to check the extravagance of the government which was impoverishing alike the people and the State. The rapid spread of this sentiment throughout the State resulted in the calling of a convention of taxpayers who assembled in Columbia on May 9, 1871. This convention endeavored to organize the “intelligence, virtue and wealth” of the State in a non-partisan movement to oppose the State administration. The convention comprising fifty-five members, including men of both parties and races, elected W. D. Porter of Charleston, president. Porter reviewed the causes which had brought them together. The first great wrong was the fearful and un-

⁵⁰ *Courier*, November 27, 1871.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, March 10, 1871.

necessary increase of the public debt. This was followed by the wild, reckless, profligate application of public monies from which, together with the increased debt, flowed the logical result of increased taxation. Yet, in the effort to combat this misgovernment, Porter admonished all to be wise and prudent; to avoid party politics, "and to act with fairness and justice as well as firmness." To every fair-minded man who was willing to place the stamp of reprobation upon corruption, and to go in good faith for economy, retrenchment and an honest administration of public affairs, the convention, the president declared, extended a welcoming hand.⁵²

The Taxpayers' Convention then adopted a platform which declared that no resistance against the United States Government was contemplated; that the reconstruction legislation of Congress was regarded as a part of the established law of the land; and that time and peaceful measures were the agencies looked to for the solution of any difficulties that then existed or might exist thereafter in the administration of government.

Certain measures of reform were considered essential to the peace and prosperity of the State. These included the adoption by the legislature of a method of voting whereby minority representation should be secured; retrenchment in the expenses of the State and strict economy in the administration of each department of the government; the prohibition of an increase of the public debt; and the prevention of the execution of the "Sterling Funded Debt Act." The platform also demanded relief from the payment of two annual taxes in one year; the filling of offices with competent men without regard to party allegiance; the amendment of the election law so as to secure justice to voters and candidates; a reduction of the pay and mileage of members of the General Assembly; and the shortening of the sessions of that body to conform to the absolute necessities of legislation.⁵³

⁵² *Proceedings of the Taxpayers' Convention*, 1871, 16-18.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 65-66, 1871; *Courier*, May 17, 1871.

The recommendations of the *Taxpayers' Convention* were not wholly ignored, as was attested by the repeal of the "Sterling Funded Debt Act" before it became operative as a law. The other recommendations bore no such positive results. R. H. Cain, however, kept up the struggle for reform. Referring to the legislature he said: "The people of this State have no control of its interests; ten or a dozen long heads direct the whole thing. The Negroes are too ignorant, the 'Rebs' are too few in number to out-vote the latter, who are too incredulous to trust the Southern whites; the wire workers play upon their passions and their fears and thus keep up a running fire between the whites and the blacks, and while they thus fight, they steal and plunder both 'Nigger and Reb.' When the smoke and fighting is over the Negroes have nothing gained and the whites have nothing left, while the jackalls have all the booty."⁵⁴ Denouncing the trial justices as banditti and excoriating the fraudulent administration of the inefficient county commissioners, Cain said: "The condition of this State is due to the Executive and his officers. Clearly they are responsible for all the ills which curse her at this day."⁵⁵ Referring again in 1872 to the "carpetbaggers as demagogues," he said: "Where are your day schools established by them? Where are the homesteads secured to you by any of them? Are you not today as dependent on your own labor for a living as you ever were? There is no interest manifested in you but to get your votes, and then you are forgotten by these men."⁵⁶ Therefore, he insisted: "Let us seek men for the offices and take none who are office seekers."⁵⁷

R. H. Cain, however, was working for reform within the ranks of the Republican party. He was trying to purify rather than destroy the organization. Others of both races advocated the same policy. The *Columbia Union*, a strictly

⁵⁴ *Courier*, Nov. 13, 1871.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 11, 1871, and Jan. 11, 1872.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1872.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1872.

partisan organ of the reconstructionists, had to speak out frequently for reform. In 1872 that paper was denouncing the long sessions of the legislature and the heavy expenditures, advocating reform, and urging the election of a better class of representatives for the legislature.⁵⁸

Some change for the better was expected from the election of 1872. F. J. Moses, Jr., former speaker of the House of Representatives, was nominated for governor by the Republicans. His ticket included four Negroes as candidates for State offices, namely: Richard H. Gleaves for lieutenant-governor, H. E. Hayne for secretary of state, F. L. Cardoza for State treasurer and H. W. Purvis for adjutant and inspector-general.⁵⁹ The platform endorsed the candidates and platform of the national Republican party, pledged the local Republicans to financial reform in the State government, proposed the suspension of interest payments on suspicious bonds, guaranteed the payment of interest on the legal debt, and pledged the party to place safeguards around the treasury. It committed the party to a reduction of public expenditures, the repeal of the general License Law, and the preservation of order in the State. It guaranteed a fair property assessment, a moderate taxation, and a full publicity to the transactions of the comptroller-general and State treasurer. The platform concluded with an appeal for the support of all Republicans that the party might have the opportunity to prove that Republicanism and good government were not inconsistent with each other.⁶⁰

This convention had some difficulty, however, in adjusting matters satisfactorily. A considerable number of Negroes, moreover, had become disgusted with certain unprincipled leaders and longed to see a general reform through the cooperation of the best elements in the State. Manifesting this independence, many of the freedmen in Charleston had assisted in electing General Wagener as

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 30 and May 11, 1872.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, August 26, 1872.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, August 26, 1872.

Mayor in 1871. Commenting on this, the *Courier* said: A very large number of colored men, to their honor be it said, had the firmness and the manhood to avow their freedom and to cast their votes in alliance with the white race of their soil.⁶¹

To a considerable number of Republicans, moreover, the State ticket as headed by F. J. Moses, Jr., was unsatisfactory. These, assembling in a separate convention, called themselves the Reform Republicans and nominated for governor, Reuben Tomlinson of Charleston. His ticket included several Negro candidates for State offices, namely: James N. Hayne for lieutenant-governor, Macon B. Allen for secretary of state, Philip E. Ezekiel for adjutant and inspector-general and B. L. Roberts for superintendent of education.⁶² The Reform Republicans endorsed the platform of the regular party, but repudiated entirely the previous Republican administrations and declared themselves humiliated over the misconduct of State administration. They pronounced the pledges of F. J. Moses, Jr., worthless, and declared in favor of an ad valorem system of taxation, any other being in their opinion unconstitutional. The Democrats put forward no State ticket but advised Democratic county organizations to elect local men of their party for the purpose of obtaining local and State reform.

In the campaign that followed the white press tried zealously to instill in the Negroes its view of their duties as citizens. Negroes, too, were especially active in urging the freedmen to support the Reform Republicans. At a Republican barbecue held in Columbia, Captain Carroll, a Negro of some prominence, severely arraigned the Republican party for the corrupt regime that it had perpetrated on the people. Scott, Neagle, and W. B. Nash, who were present, also spoke, as did other prominent Republicans. "The speeches of the Negroes," declared the *Courier*, "were all directed chiefly to one and the same point—the imperative

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 14, 1871.

⁶² *Ibid.*, August 27, 1872.

necessity of reform." The whole tone of the meeting, continued the reporter, was significant in the extreme. According to this journal, it seemed to indicate that the intelligent colored men of South Carolina were beginning to open their eyes to the fact that they had been deceived and plundered by their pretended friends from the North, and that they had made up their minds to submit to it no longer.⁶³

The election, however, resulted in a victory for the regular Republicans. F. J. Moses, Jr., who was elected governor by a majority of 33,305 votes, moreover, proceeded to give the State the most corrupt administration of the reconstruction. The cost of public printing rapidly increased, amounting to \$450,000 a year in 1873. This was due, it was said, to the necessity for bribing certain members of the legislature in the passage of printing claims. Payments and convictions under the enforcement act at the rate of \$200 to an informer for each person reported as convicted exceeded the required amount by more than \$13,000 through padded reports. The contingent expense funds of the executive were reported as being used for bribery, loans were granted the Governor from the assets of the State Bank while those assets were in the hands of a receiver, and Hardy Solomon's bank claims were illegally approved.

As a protest against the corruption and extravagance of the Moses administration Republican organs themselves criticised its leaders for not keeping the party pledges.⁶⁴ R. H. Cain and A. J. Ransier, speaking for the enlightened Negroes, again denounced corruption and insisted that intelligence must rule.⁶⁵ The taxpayers met again in convention at Columbia, on February 17, 1874. Of the 179 delegates to this convention, representing all counties except Oconee, two were Negroes. These were Samuel Lark of Aiken and David Strother of Darlington. The president, W. D. Porter, addressing the body, reviewed in de-

⁶³ *Ibid.*, July 31, 1872.

⁶⁴ *Union Herald*, Feb. 22, March 4, 20, June 24, 1874.

⁶⁵ *News and Courier*, Oct. 3, 1874.

tail the grievances of the citizens against the mal-administration from which they suffered, and besides suggesting the non-payment of taxes as a remedy for their distress, recommended certain other expedients. These included the encouragement of immigration so as to bring into the State a sturdier laboring class to develop its resources, and the establishment of affiliated taxpayers' clubs in every county, with central headquarters in Columbia, as a means to expose official misconduct more readily. Finally the convention was advised to memorialize Congress, reciting its grievances and invoking that body to relieve the citizens of their distress.⁶⁶

These measures were adopted and put into effect. The Statewide organization of local taxpayers' clubs soon followed. The memorial to Congress was effective in drawing from the Central Committee of the Union Republican party a reply thereto, especially with regard to the alleged manipulation of the annual expenses of the government from 1851 to 1867 inclusive, as compared with the annual expenditures during the reconstruction. The expenditure for public printing of \$450,000 in the year 1872-1873 was defended as covering three years rather than one year, and attempts were made to refute other charges. This led to a rejoinder by the taxpayers' committee which substantially defended their charges recently controverted.

That the taxpayers' memorial had made a deep impression upon the public mind was indicated not only by the comments of the public press but by those of influential Negro leaders like R. H. Cain and J. H. Rainey. Among some Negroes the protest against corruption went further than the mere effort to reform within the ranks of the Republican party. One of those thus seriously concerned was Martin R. Delany. Criticizing the reconstructionists in a letter to Justice Wright, Delany found only one commendable act to their credit. That was the establishment of the Land Commission, which, in undesirable hands, had

⁶⁶ *Proceedings of the Taxpayers' Convention, 1874; News and Courier, Feb. 23, 1874.*

become productive of fraud. He blamed the reconstructionists for excessive taxation and endeavored to show that in the final analysis the tax is paid by the consumer rather than by the producer. He cautioned the Negroes against corruption; for the time would come, he thought, when as a result of immigration the whites would outnumber the blacks, and, the scale once turned, their calamities would follow. "The white race," said he, "is true to itself, and it is useless and doing injustice to both races to conceal the fact that in giving liberty and equality of right to the blacks, they had no desire to see them rule over their own race. . . . Rest assured of this," continued he, "that there are no white people North or South, who will submit to see the black rule over the whites in America." ⁶⁷

The contest in the Republican State Convention to name candidates for the State elections of 1874 showed the effect of these sentiments. F. J. Moses, Jr., as a candidate for reelection as governor, was clearly impossible; yet D. H. Chamberlain, who was supported by the regular wing of the party, was regarded by the State press an accessory of Moses, Patterson, and Parker in the fraudulent transactions that had involved the wealth and honor of the State. Chamberlain was opposed also by Congressmen Cain and Rainey and some of the leading white Republicans of the State. Yet by a majority of 22 votes he won the nomination over John T. Green and John Winnsmith, his leading opponents. The contest over the nomination for lieutenant-governor was won by R. H. Gleaves, who defeated Martin R. Delany by a majority of 86 votes. Both contestants for this office were Negroes.⁶⁸ The platform of the Republican party contained the usual pledges of reform as to taxation, property assessment, public expenditures and the protection of State property. It pledged the party to maintain the public debt as lately agreed upon. It condemned lawlessness, covered matters of interest to special

⁶⁷ *News and Courier*, Feb. 13, Oct. 3, 1874.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, September 14, 1874.

classes and appealed to all Republicans for the support of the party candidates.⁶⁹

As in 1872, the dissatisfaction over the nominations led to a division in the party. The Independent Republicans nominated for governor and lieutenant-governor, respectively, John T. Green and Martin R. Delany, lately defeated contestants in the regular Republican convention. Both candidates were regarded as being intelligent, efficient, incorruptible men. They were pledged the support not only of disaffected Republicans but of many Democrats, since no Democratic State ticket was nominated that year.⁷⁰ The platform of the party pledged "reform, retrenchment and honest government."⁷¹

The movement to nominate Green as an independent candidate had been given impetus through a very important effort sponsored by Negroes, known as the Honest Government League of South Carolina. The league was composed of intelligent Negroes who desired reform. The league proposed to cooperate with the best whites with a view to recovering the government from the dominant Republican element. The leaders of the movement were R. H. Cain, the editor of the *Missionary Record*, always a dauntless advocate of reform, Congressman Joseph H. Rainey of Georgetown, and Martin R. Delany, frequently referred to by the State press as "the honest exemplar of the honest colored men of South Carolina."⁷²

Most of the white press supported this ticket and urged the people to elect a legislature that would enable Green, as governor, to promote the reforms he, then, so fearlessly advocated. Nevertheless, an uncompromising element of the Democratic party denounced the movement. Representing this element, the "Sumter *True Southron*" declared that so far as it knew, Green had kept aloof from the

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, September 15, 1874.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1874.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, September 21 and October 5, 1874.

⁷² *Ibid.*, September 2 and October 2 and 3, 1874.

frauds and corruption of his party, yet he was a radical and had abandoned his own people. This journal was therefore bound in honor and in conscience to repudiate him, and, if possible, defeat his election.⁷³ The contest was bitterly fought out but resulted in the election of the Chamberlain ticket by a popular vote of 80,403 to 68,818.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1874.

CHAPTER XI

REFORM WITHIN THE RANKS

One of the benefits of the opposition to the corruptionists was that it prevented the extension of fraud to the point of causing the people to rise up in open arms against them. There followed within the ranks of the reconstructionists, therefore, some effort to correct the abuses complained of and to elect honest men to office. This effort during the first six years of the reconstruction, of course, failed because the dishonest machine on the inside was invincible, but the large majority of the people supporting the reconstruction leaders were sincere in trying to discharge the functions of citizenship honorably. Knowing this to be the case, the corruptionists, even when assured of continuance in power, had to keep up at least appearances of making amends.

The much discussed overissue of State bonds under Governor Scott, for example, forced an investigation itself through the unfavorable publicity which it received throughout the country. As the perpetrators of the crime had been detected before they could bag all of their game, the matter had to be exposed. The House committee, appointed at the session of the legislature in 1870-1871 to investigate this matter, charged that the State had been defrauded by an overissue of bonds to the sum of \$6,314,000 and recommended that the necessary steps be taken to hold accountable those who had violated the law and ruined the credit of the State.¹ In consequence of this report, C. C. Bowen introduced a resolution that R. K. Scott, the Governor of the State, be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors. A resolution of similar import was introduced in connection with Niles G. Parker, the State treasurer. These resolutions were rejected by a vote of

¹ *South Carolina General Assembly Reports and Resolutions, 1871-1872, 901-903.*

65 to 32 in the case of Scott, and 63 to 27 in that of Parker.²

Certain legislation enacted during the administration of Governor F. J. Moses, Jr., constituted the basis of subsequent reforms. One such measure was the act to reduce the volume of the public debt. By this measure the issue of conversion bonds amounting to \$5,965,000 was repudiated as invalid, and the acknowledged bonded debt, in the sum of \$11,480,033.91, was authorized to be refunded and paid at fifty per cent of its nominal value. By October 31, 1876, the amount of bonds and stock exchanged under this law amounted to \$8,677,518.53 and the public debt was then reported as \$7,109,250.44 exclusive of the interest thereon.³

Other reform measures repealed the statutes requiring the attorney-general and other officers to designate certain papers in which all legal notices should be published, provided for specific tax levies, and prohibited by constitutional amendment the increase of the public debt except by a two-thirds vote of the qualified electors voting on the question. There had been also a reduction in the number of public officers and in their salaries, though such action was narrow in scope. Yet all of these measures constituted either an immediate or future saving of State funds and the specific tax levies measure did much to protect the treasury from dishonest officials.⁴

Despite the reform legislation enacted under Governor Moses, serious problems of administration confronted D. H. Chamberlain, who assumed office in 1874. Governor Chamberlain asserted that the State finances had been grossly mismanaged during the preceding six years of Republican rule. The expenditures of public funds for the single item of executive contingent expenses, he said, amounted to \$376,832.74. The legislative expenses comprising the pay and mileage of members, the salaries of

² *South Carolina House Journal*, 1871-1872, 166, 173, 174, 176, 178, 181, 182, 184.

³ *Acts*, 1873-1874, 518-523; *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 36. *Reports and Resolutions*, 1876-1877, *Report of Comptroller-General*.

⁴ *Acts*, 1873-1874.

subordinates and incidental expenses aggregated \$2,147,430.97. Besides, there were outstanding and unpaid, certificates or bills payable for legislative expenses, \$192,275.15. The cost of public printing including the printing of statutes in the newspapers had amounted to \$918,629.86. The bonded debt, then reduced, had been increased by nearly \$13,000,000 including principal and unpaid interest, and the floating indebtedness of the State aggregated \$1,000,000 or more. In the light of this situation, concluded the executive, the paramount duty then before the administration was the practice of economy and honesty in government.⁵

As measures designed to accomplish this purpose, Governor Chamberlain committed his administration to the attainment of certain specific reforms. These included the prompt discharge of obligations arising in connection with the public debt; the reduction of public expenditures, especially as related to the executive contingent funds, legislative expenses, legislative contingent expenses, the public printing, the salaries of public officers and deficiencies; the revision of the assessment and taxation law with a view to obtaining an equitable valuation of property; a reduction of taxation; the regulation of county finances; the adoption of the principle of minority representation; the election of justices of the peace and constables as provided by the constitution; the enforcement of the constitutional provision regarding the registration of electors; and a judicious exercise of the pardoning power.⁶

Coming into office under the stigma of having cooperated closely with the corruptionists of the previous administrations, however, Chamberlain⁷ was looked upon with a great deal of suspicion. His promise for reform

⁵ *House Journal*, 1874-1875.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1874-1875, 47-67; 216-233.

⁷ The legislature elected at the same time as Governor Chamberlain consisted of eighty-two Republicans and forty-two Democrats in the House of Representatives and twenty-two Republicans and eleven Democrats in the Senate. Sixty-one of the representatives and sixteen of the senators were Negroes.

made little impression, for Scott and Moses had been equally as prolific in promises. When, however, he began to make wholesale removals of corrupt officers and replaced them by honest and competent men, when he dared to veto corrupt schemes of the legislature, the native whites began to say that the reform had at last appeared in South Carolina.

The larger reforms of the Chamberlain administration related especially to matters of a financial nature. Several such reforms were obtained by the vigilance of the executive manifested through the judicious exercise of the veto power. A case in point was the action taken on a measure amendatory of the act to reduce the volume of the public debt. This measure, sometimes called the Consolidation Act, provided for the refunding of the recognized debt of the State at one-half of its nominal value in consolidated bonds and certificates of stock. At the legislative session of 1874-1875, an act was passed to declare the true intent and meaning of the Consolidation Act whereby the interest on the fundable debt should be funded up to the time of funding rather than up to January 1, 1874, as theretofore provided. The consolidation bonds would then bear interest from the date of their issue rather than from January 1, 1874.

With reference to the measure, the executive reiterated his view that the settlement of the public debt by the act of 1873 was regarded by the citizens of the State as final. He declared, furthermore, that the inevitable effect of any change in the Consolidation Act would be to unsettle the returning confidence of the State's creditors and seriously retard the completion of exchanging the public debt, which he considered essential to the prosperity of the people. The Governor was compelled, therefore, to disapprove the measure. The Senate sustained the veto by a vote of fifteen to fourteen. Five Democratic Senators supported the Governor.⁸

⁸ *Senate Journal*, 1874-1875, 775-778.

In March 1875, the General Assembly enacted a measure relating to the deposit of the monies of the State. This bill, designed to repeal the existing law which imposed upon a Board of Deposit composed of the governor, comptroller-general and state treasurer, the duty of selecting State depositories, authorized that all State funds should be deposited in the Carolina National Bank and the South Carolina Bank and Trust Company, both of Columbia. These two banks, the latter under the control of Hardy Solomon, were constituted the exclusive depositories of the State, from which the public funds might not be removed except by the order of the General Assembly. Governor Chamberlain vetoed the bill on the ground of public policy, declaring that no man competent to care for his own funds would deposit \$100,000 in each of these two banks designated by the act. The Senate sustained the veto by a vote of eighteen to twelve. Five Democrats supported the Governor.⁹

On July 2, 1875, the South Carolina Bank and Trust Company failed. The vigilance of the executive, which prevented the deposit of an additional half million of State funds therein, had not been sufficient to preserve the State from a loss of \$205,753.79. Of this amount \$37,000 had been deposited after the Governor had vetoed the measure making the bank one of the two exclusive State depositories. This action authorizing the additional deposits was taken by the Board of Deposit despite the negative vote of the Treasurer Cardoza whose more intimate official relations with the bank warranted a greater consideration of his judgment. The legislative committee which later investigated the failure of the bank felt that the condition of that institution prior to the collapse could not have been entirely unknown to the Board of Deposit, especially since Governor Chamberlain had been the attorney for and a director of the bank since its organization.¹⁰

There was passed, during the session of 1874-1875, a

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1874-1875, 607-613; 627.

¹⁰ *Reports and Resolutions*, 1875-1876, 889-967.

measure providing for the payment of the State's floating indebtedness which had arisen from the issuance of legislative pay certificates, treasurer's due bills, bills payable and the claims passed by the General Assembly. A large part of this indebtedness the Governor regarded to be of doubtful validity. The measure which provided for the reduction of these claims to one-half of their nominal value, and the payment of the same in four equal installments, also authorized the appointment of a commission to adjust the claims and named the commissioners. To this procedure Governor Chamberlain objected, because of the uncertain character of the claims and the want of public confidence in the commissioners. The vetoed measure was not returned to the House within the time allowed by the constitution, with the result that Speaker Elliott declared the measure a law. This view was sustained by the Supreme Court of the State, but the legislature receded therefrom when the Governor threatened to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. New measures were subsequently passed in accordance with the views of the executive whose persistence in this matter saved the State, according to the *News and Courier*, over \$400,000.¹¹

The act to raise supplies for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 1875, was likewise disapproved by Governor Chamberlain because, in his judgment, the tax levy was too high. By a thorough analysis of the requirements of the State Governor Chamberlain demonstrated that the tax levy should be reduced from thirteen mills on the dollar to nine and five-sixths mills for current expenses. The veto was unanimously sustained and a law enacted in conformity with the Governor's suggestions levied a tax of nine and one-half mills for current expenses. The provision for deficiencies and claims, however, raised the State tax to eleven mills.¹²

Furthermore, the new levy was made on a property valuation of \$134,514,666 based upon a revision of the as-

¹¹ *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 663-668, *News and Courier*, July 12, 1876.

¹² *House Journal*, 1875-1876, 31-37; 44.

assessment and taxation act, and more strictly in accord with the market value of the property. This was in response to the recommendations made by the Governor subsequent to his inaugural address wherein he stated the iniquities of the assessment and taxation act and urged a revision of the same. Under the new act, the *News and Courier* agreed with the Governor that the State tax law was then well adapted to secure equality and uniformity in the assessment of property for taxation. From 1870 to 1875, asserted the *News and Courier*, such had been the reduction in the assessed value of property that a tax of one per cent would take from the people, at the prevailing valuation, less than a tax of three-quarters per cent would take on the basis of 1870. In 1874 and 1875 the gain by the revision and reduction of the assessment equalled a saving of twenty per cent, while the rate of taxation remaining stationary would have entailed upon the taxpayers, at the reduced valuation, an expense of one-fifth less than in 1873.¹³

Similar to the revision of the tax law, the reforms connected with the executive contingent funds resulted from the recommendations of the executive. Convinced that executive officers had applied to their personal use funds entrusted to them for disbursement, Governor Chamberlain characterized the system of contingent funds as being wrong in principle and mischievous and demoralizing in effect. From 1868-1874, he asserted, there had been appropriated and paid for contingent expenses the sum of \$376,832.74. Chamberlain believed the State would have received equal benefit from one-fifth of that sum, if expended with economy upon proper objects. He recommended, therefore, that the appropriation of contingent funds be made for all public objects which could be anticipated or enumerated, and that \$10,000 or \$12,000 be appropriated for contingent expenses, to be paid on the warrant

¹³ *House Journal*, 1875-1876, 6; *Reports and Resolutions*, 1875-1876, IX; *News and Courier*, July 12, 1876.

of the comptroller-general, drawn upon vouchers to be filed by the officers obtaining the warrant.¹⁴

By this method not only were the intolerable abuses formerly connected with the expenditure of the contingent funds removed, but there was made a greater gain from the point of view of public morality and economy. Accountability and publicity, the two chief safeguards of official integrity, were thereby secured. As a result the appropriations for the contingent funds of executive officers, for the year 1874-1875, amounted to \$15,250. The next year, 1875-1876, they amounted to \$9,100. The aggregate amount of \$24,350 appropriated for the two years amounted to an annual average of \$12,175 for this purpose. Contrarily, the appropriations for the preceding two years under Moses equalled \$88,100. The annual average appropriation was \$44,050. A net saving of \$63,750 resulted in two years.¹⁵

The legislative expenses were, likewise, reduced so as to conform somewhat to the recommendations of the executive. These expenses had formerly been enhanced by a number of unnecessary subordinate officers, the higher emoluments of these and the members, the length of the sessions, and abuses which arose in connection with the legislative contingent expenditures. The Governor recommended in his inaugural address a reduction in the number of offices and the salaries of officers and members, a shortening of the length of the sessions, and above all the establishment of a proper system of accountability in the payment of legislative expenses. The abuses, theretofore tolerated, had cost the State for six regular and two special sessions, since 1868, \$2,147,430.97, at an annual expense a regular session of \$320,405.10. The lowest cost of any session was \$169,005.79 in 1868-1869; the highest, \$617,234.10, in 1871-1872. The sessions of 1872-1873 and 1873-1874 cost respectively \$210,000 and \$265,000. The total cost of the two sessions was \$475,000. On the other hand, the sessions of

¹⁴ *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 52.

¹⁵ *Acts*, 1872-1876.

1874-1875 and 1875-1876 cost \$150,000 and \$140,000 respectively. The total cost of \$290,000 indicated a saving of \$185,000 in legislative expenses in two years. The annual average expenditure of \$145,000 constituted a reduction of \$175,405.10 under the annual average amount theretofore expended.

Besides, the legislative contingent expenses had been at each regular session not less than \$190,000. The executive recommended a reduction in these expenses and a change in the manner of their payment. At the session of 1875-1876, the legislature passed acts to provide the manner of proving claims against the State and relating to the payment of legislative expenses, both of which embodied the Governor's recommendations. By these acts a proper system of accountability in legislative expenditures was enforced. The appropriation for legislative contingent expenses was \$13,000 in 1874-1875, and \$12,000 in 1875-1876. The total appropriated in the two years was \$25,000. The annual average of \$12,500 was therefore at least \$77,500 less than the annual average amount hitherto expended.¹⁶

The expenditures for public printing during the six years preceding Chamberlain's administration had been enormous. From 1868 to 1874, the cost of the permanent and current printing was \$843,073. The cost of advertising for the same period was \$261,496. The total cost was \$1,104,569. Of this total, \$918,629 was expended in the three years 1872, 1873, and 1874. For this period the annual average cost of printing and advertising was \$306,209. With a view to substituting for the prevailing system one which would be more economical, Governor Chamberlain recommended that the necessary public printing be done by contract, for a fixed price, the most advantageous offer to the State to be accepted. By the measure enacted to embrace this recommendation, there was authorized to be appropriated for the annual cost of public printing \$50,000. This constituted a reduction from the annual average of the preceding two years in the sum

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1868-1876.

of \$256,209. The net saving in public printing expenditures from 1874 to 1876 aggregated \$512,418.

The administration of certain functionaries came also under the scrutinizing eye of reform. At the session of 1874-1875 the Senate adopted a resolution to appoint a committee to investigate charges made against T. C. Andrews, a Senator from Orangeburg, regarding his connection with County Treasurer J. L. Humbert, and transactions in the office of that functionary. The committee, composed of Robert Smalls and four others, reported that the conduct of Andrews had been highly improper in that the evidence had established the existence of a corrupt bargain between Humbert and Andrews. The majority of the committee including Smalls recommended the expulsion of the member. A minority recommended a resolution of censure, and a motion to expel Andrews was defeated by a vote of 19 to 12.¹⁷

At the same session of the legislature, a special joint committee of the two branches appointed to ascertain what bonds had been funded under the Consolidation Act and whether funds for payment of interest on such bonds had been kept separate from all other funds as the law required, reported that certain coupons had been funded contrary to the law and that the funds in question had not been kept separate as the law demanded. This report resulted in a concurrent resolution for the appointment of a committee to prepare an address to the governor, under the authority of the constitution, demanding the removal from office of State Treasurer F. L. Cardoza. The address as submitted to the two houses for final action charged that the state treasurer had been guilty of misconduct and irregularity in the administration of his office, and that he had been guilty of wilful neglect of duty. Specifications in support of these general charges were therewith presented. Cardoza was given an opportunity to be heard and his defense was sufficient to secure a rejection of the

¹⁷ *Senate Journal*, 1874-1875, 234, 235, 236, 237; *Reports and Resolutions*, 1874-1875, 529.

address. The vote in the Senate was 19 to 11, and in the House 63 to 45.¹⁸

The effort to dislodge Cardoza, however, was no part of Chamberlain's program for reform. Regretting that an honest man had been thus unnecessarily attacked, Governor Chamberlain said: "I have never heard one word or seen one act of Mr. Cardoza's which did not confirm my confidence in his personal integrity and his political honor and zeal for the honest administration of the State Government. On every occasion and under all circumstances he has been against fraud and jobbery and in favor of good measures and good men."^{18a}

Although Cardoza was in error in diverting for any purpose the monies constituting the interest fund, the *News and Courier*, which regarded Cardoza an excellent public servant, considered his reply to the committee otherwise a complete justification of his course. The editor excused his action on the ground that Cardoza's office had been overworked in its necessary readjustment to the extent that such an error could be easily made as a result of having too many things to claim his attention. As the State had not lost a single dollar by the transaction, the editor would dismiss the affair with the verdict of a western jury to the effect, "not guilty, but do not do it again." This chief organ of the native whites shared with a correspondent of the *New York Tribune* the opinion that the attack upon Cardoza was really aimed by the "corruptionists" at Governor Chamberlain, who counted upon the State Treasurer as his chief aid in carrying out the reform pledges of his administration.¹⁹

The reform, however, continued. At the session of the legislature of 1875-1876, special committees reported that irregularities and corruption had characterized the conduct of several State officials some of whom were removed from office. Thus a special committee of the House reported that

¹⁸ *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 631-634, 688; *Senate Journal*, 691.

^{18a} Walter Allen, *Governor Chamberlain's Administration in South Carolina*, 82.

¹⁹ *News and Courier*, March 3, 1875; *New York Tribune*, June 11, 1875.

C. P. Leslie had engaged in fraudulent transactions in connection with his administration as Land Commissioner.²⁰ The report of a committee appointed as a result of a concurrent resolution to inquire into the affairs of the Solomon Bank and ascertain the causes of its failure, charged that the books of the bank had been falsified, that Solomon had appropriated its cash, and that its capital stock had been fraudulently retired. The report also charged F. L. Cardoza with irregularities in connection with this bank.²¹ The attorney-general was instructed to institute criminal proceedings against all who were guilty of any violation of the law in connection with the bank.

Still another committee found J. Douglass Robertson, a member of the School Textbook Commission, guilty of having made to certain book publishers propositions discreditable and corrupt such that his conduct constituted a betrayal of the trust vested in him. Robertson was, upon the recommendation of the committee, removed from the Commission, and expelled from the House by a vote of 56 to 25.²² During this session also, Judge Montgomery Moses of the Seventh Circuit was impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors, found guilty of the misconduct charged, and removed from office.²³

There followed, too, the suit of the State against its former corrupt treasurer, Niles G. Parker, by which it secured a judgment for the recovery of \$75,000 of which he had defrauded the commonwealth. Some of the Northern press found occasion to congratulate the State of South Carolina on the fact that during its reconstruction it was able to convict at least one of the corruptionists. In 1875 the *New York Journal of Commerce* thus commented on the successful prosecution of such a malefactor made possible through the reconstruction General Assembly. According to this journal, South Carolina had scored a victory over New York in the race for reform. "While our Governor

²⁰ *Reports and Resolutions*, 1875-1876, 1160-1165.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 889-899.

²² *Ibid.*, 868-883.

²³ *Ibid.*, 975-1124.

and Attorney-General have been talking about the initiation of civil proceedings against the canal robbers," it continued, "South Carolina has quietly begun and finished up a suit against one of her ring thieves, and the jury have brought in a verdict of \$75,000. The defendant is ex-Treasurer Parker and his offence the appropriation and conversion of a quantity of bond-coupons belonging to the State."²⁴ The *New York Herald* commented concurrently in a similar view, according to which the suits against the Tammany plunderers were of much older date than the South Carolina frauds action, yet there had been neither restitution nor recovery. Even the massive suits against Tweed were allowed to drag slowly on.²⁵

Further praise awaited the commendable effort to reduce consistently the salaries of public officers. Governor Chamberlain had declared in his inaugural address that he would approve any plan that would reduce expenses by abolishing offices or decreasing salaries. Shortly thereafter a bill embodying his views was passed by the House in a modified form.²⁶ This was sidetracked in the Senate by the Committee on Finance. On January 27, 1876, Chamberlain urged forcibly upon the General Assembly the wisdom of passing the salary bill. A reduction of one-third of the prevailing salaries he regarded justifiable. This might be accomplished in part by the abolishment of the salaries of circuit solicitors, the reduction by one-half of the salaries of the school commissioners and the arrangement of the pay of county treasurers and court auditors so as to increase the resources of the State, while reducing the remuneration of these officers. On February 2, 1876, the Governor read to the House Committee on Ways and Means an itemized statement of the reductions which he considered imperative and recommended prompt action upon them. The House complied therewith by enacting a measure embodying those suggestions. The Senate gave the bill a

²⁴ Taken from the *News and Courier*, July 26, 1875.

²⁵ Taken from *News and Courier*, July 26, 1875.

²⁶ *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 284.

first reading and continued it on the calendar for the next session. After all, the efforts to reduce salaries resulted in a saving of approximately \$30,000 in the salaries to be paid during the next fiscal year.²⁷

As regards deficiencies, the executive denounced them as constituting an intolerable abuse and urged their eradication by keeping the expenditures within the income. This might be accomplished by ascertaining the amount of money required to be expended, and levying a tax sufficient to raise that sum. As a result of pressure in this direction, there followed a reduction in the deficiencies. Appropriations made in the tax levy of 1874-1875 exceeded the possible receipts by \$180,000. This together with the loss occasioned by the failure of the South Carolina Bank and Trust Company aggregated a total deficiency of \$308,872 for 1874-1875. Nevertheless the deficiency for 1874-1875 was less by \$223,315 than that of 1873-1874. It was smaller in amount than that of 1872-1873 by \$291,024.²⁸

The aggregate savings to the State in the two years, 1874 to 1876, constituted an amount the realization of which would have required a tax of nearly fifteen mills on the dollar on the basis of the prevailing property valuation, asserted the *News and Courier*.²⁹ Specifically, the savings from the "Bonanza bill" amounted to \$400,000; the reduction from the executive contingent expenses equalled \$101,260; the decreased legislative expenditures saved \$350,000; the contingent expenses of the legislature effected a saving of \$355,000; and the public printing appropriations were less by \$512,418. Thus there was saved, in two years, by the exercise of economy and honesty in government, the significant sum of \$1,719,488.

Besides promoting reform in the administration of the State government, the executive recommended certain readjustments relating to county finances. In January 1875, Governor Chamberlain urged that the past indebtedness

²⁷ *News and Courier*, July 14, 1876.

²⁸ *Acts*, 1872-1876.

²⁹ The valuation used by the *News and Courier* referred to real and personal property exclusive of railroad property.

of the counties be gradually paid by tax levies distributed over two or more years, and to prevent future deficiencies, urged that the system of specific levies be applied to county taxes. He recommended, further, that claims against the counties be properly audited before payment and be submitted, where practicable, to judicial scrutiny. The Governor also vetoed certain measures relating to particular counties, and affecting, in some instances, the county finances.³⁰

Besides the financial reforms which it prosecuted so vigorously, the administration sought to promote other reforms with varying success. Such was its effort to secure the legislative adoption of the principle of minority representation. D. H. Chamberlain had sponsored that principle in the Taxpayers' Convention of 1871. A resolution was passed endorsing the proposal which Governor R. K. Scott³¹ agreed to recommend for the consideration of the legislature. Since unfavorable action had been taken on the measure, it was recommended later by Governor Chamberlain to be applied to the elections in incorporated cities and towns. Although reported to have worked successfully in Anderson, the system of minority representation failed of statewide adoption.³²

The executive also sought to prohibit the violation of the constitutional provision requiring the election of justices of the peace and constables in the counties. There had arisen, in lieu of this, a system of officers called trial justices. This was reported to be costly, inefficient and oppressive. As a result several recommendations from Governor Chamberlain resulted in the introduction before the General Assembly of bills to provide for the elections as required by the constitution. Yet no general law to this effect was enacted, although certain local bills limiting the number of such officers and the expenses of their courts were passed.

³⁰ *House Journals*, 1875-1876, 13; *News and Courier*, July 8 and 15, 1876.

³¹ *Proceedings, Taxpayers' Convention*, 1871.

³² *House and Senate Journals*, 1874-1875.

The appointment of three hundred and fifty trial justices, besides such other officials as county auditors and county treasurers, remained a duty of the governor. The difficulties ordinarily attaching to the appointment of efficient, honest men were increased, in this instance, by the disinclination of the Senate to confirm appointees politically hostile to the majority, despite the dearth of qualified candidates affiliated with the majority party. Such appointments based necessarily on the representations of third persons resulted in the induction into office of numerous incompetent or untrustworthy officials. Yet the appointees under Chamberlain, declared the *News and Courier*, were on the whole persons of character and ability.³³

The requirement of honesty and efficiency on the part of public officials caused the executive to remove from office Thomas S. Cavender, whom he had appointed as auditor of Chesterfield County and a commissioner under the act for the settlement and payment of claims against the State. There were brought charges against which Cavender presented no effectual defense, making it appear that he had abused the confidence reposed in him, to the injury of the State and his personal profit. Although this suspicion attached to his duty as a commissioner, Cavender was removed from both offices. In somewhat the same way several other local officers were removed from their positions in the interest of good government.

In the matter of protecting the public service against persons deemed unworthy, the executive extended his jurisdiction to officers elected by the legislature. Governor Chamberlain had formerly exercised his influence to prohibit the election of W. J. Whipper and F. J. Moses, Jr., as circuit judges in South Carolina. On December 16, 1875, however, the legislature elected these men as Judges of the first and third circuits respectively.

Good government was the objective sought in the effort to enforce the constitutional provision requiring the regis-

³³ *Senate Journal*, 1874-1876; *News and Courier*, July 7, 1876.

tration of electors. No registration had been taken since 1868. Regarding this matter, the executive held that the obvious justice of a registration of electors, aside from the positive mandate of the constitution, rendered any argument in its favor needless. This view voiced in the inaugural address was reiterated by Governor Chamberlain in January 1875. The inaction of the legislature caused him to renew this recommendation.³⁴ In November 1875, he stated that in a political or party view he feared nothing more than the effect of a plain disregard of constitutional requirements. Nevertheless, the legislature failed to provide for the enforcement of the registration of electors.³⁵

The effort to reform, however, extended even to the matter of race antagonisms. The executive action in the case of the Edgefield disturbances of January 1875 exhibited a non-partisan attitude illustrative of the character of the new administration. Judge T. J. Mackey was sent to investigate the outbreak in the county. According to his report, the whites had resisted the gross abuses and exactions of the county officials, further aggravated by the use of the militia to enforce arbitrary rulings and even to settle personal disputes. As a result of this intelligence Governor Chamberlain issued forthwith a proclamation requiring the disarming of the militia in that county, and the disbanding of all armed military organizations existing in Edgefield contrary to the law. The proclamation also urged the citizens to adopt lawful and peaceful means to secure the removal from office of dishonest and incompetent officials.

A similar non-partisan attitude was exhibited when the Negro rice hands in Colleton and Beaufort Counties struck for a fifty per cent increase of wages, in the summer of 1876. Besides refusing to work themselves, many visited neighboring plantations and prevented satisfied laborers from working. These strikers were firmly told that this interference would not be tolerated, although no one would

³⁴ The more he reformed the government, the more aggressive the corruptionists became in combatting his measures.

³⁵ *House Journal*, 1874-1875, 63; 1875-1876, 26.

be forced to work contrary to his will. Stringent measures were taken to enforce this mandate, especially in Beaufort County, prior to the restoration of peace. The Governor condemned, also, the Charleston riot of September 6, 1876, which he regarded as an exhibition of political intolerance on the part of Republicans who seemed to have begun the affray. These Republicans, it was reported, were Negroes.

A reform of some consequence in which the executive actions were unrestrained related to the exercise of the pardoning power. In his inaugural address Governor Chamberlain had stated his intention to exercise this power with regard to the repression of crime and the protection of society. This pledge was important for the reason that the number of pardons granted during the preceding six years attested the abuse of executive clemency during these years. There were issued under Governor Scott 579 pardons in four years, while Governor Moses granted 457 pardons in two years. Contrasted with this was the pardon by Governor Chamberlain of 73 convicts, from December 1, 1874 to May 31, 1876. Sixty-six of these were recommended to be pardoned by the Judges before whom the cases were tried, and in the case of the remaining seven, the Judges raised no objections to the grants. Seventy-four applications for pardons during the period were denied. The result of this salutary action elevated the dignity of the law and tended to repress personal crime in South Carolina.³⁶

These considerable reforms, the legislative records show, were accomplished despite the opposition of an influential element in the legislature. Throughout the greater part of the administration, extending even to the Republican State Convention of 1876, such influential leaders as C. C. Bowen, B. F. Whittemore and R. B. Elliott, although affecting to endorse the reforms accomplished, consistently opposed the executive that promoted them.

³⁶ *Reports and Resolutions, 1868-1876, Report of Sup't of the Penitentiary; News and Courier, July 7, 1876.*

The course of Chamberlain, then, was clear. He had either to gain the support of the majority of his party, or to cooperate with those legislators who, regardless of political affiliations, manifested a sincere desire for reform. The courageous character of the executive's attack on corruption soon won for him the support of the reform element of the legislature. The numerous reforms accomplished by this cooperation of progressive Republicans and liberal Democrats demonstrated that the election of a reform legislature was the sole requirement for the complete restoration of good government.

Chamberlain was then hailed as a savior. He was admitted into the most aristocratic society, sought by fashionable associations, and lionized at banquets and feasts. The comments of the press will indicate how popular Chamberlain had become. The *News and Courier* all but served him as spokesman, and in the interest of his reelection eulogized him in one way or another in almost every issue during the first half of 1876, pointing out the reform which he had systematically carried out. Other newspapers in April, 1875 did not lag behind in such laudatory mention. The *Union Times* said: "We take pleasure in saying to him 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' " The *Camden Journal* said: "Our people are indebted to Governor Chamberlain for the harmlessness of the late session. Governor Chamberlain could not have desired greater success than he has had in restoring decent government to South Carolina." The *Spartanburg Spartan* said: "He has already broken the backbone of the *Ring*, and has nothing to fear from them in the future." The *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer* said: "If Governor Chamberlain continues in the course he has so far pursued, and we have faith that he will do so, he will earn a reputation that will place his name high on the roll of great men, who have adorned the history of South Carolina. The honest citizens of the State will have reason to rejoice that he came from New England to take part in our public affairs." ³⁷

³⁷ *News and Courier*, April 8, 1875.

White leaders and newspapers represented by the *News and Courier* clamored for his reelection at the time the anti-reform element of the Republican party was threatening either to defeat his renomination or bolt. Bipartisan schemes had already been carried out in several city elections where tickets of half Democrats and half Republicans had been elected. This caused some native whites to feel that a new era was about to dawn. As all of the Democrats of the State would not accept the plan to cooperate in his reelection, the proposal all but divided that party. Some insisted that a statewide effort should be made to revive the Democratic party and overthrow the Republican. Others like the editor of the *News and Courier*, feeling that the Democrats were incompetent in the premises, considered it wiser to assure the progress of reform by securing the reelection of Chamberlain. In the State Democratic Convention of 1876, therefore, the proposal not to nominate anyone to run against him was lost by a narrow margin.³⁸

There was an undercurrent among certain Democrats who believed that Chamberlain was a talented, ambitious, and unscrupulous man. They thought that he had been a corruptionist while it suited his designs, but that on becoming governor he had determined to procure an election to the United States Senate and go there with such a powerful Southern support behind him that he could play an important part in national politics. It is said that Chamberlain's plan was to carry the State with the support of the Democrats who would nominate on his ticket a lieutenant-governor with the understanding that after the election he would be thus promoted and leave the governorship to this incumbent. Others said that Chamberlain went with the current until he gained power to control it; that then, out of pure love of political science, he undertook to bring about a reconciliation between the races and solve the great problem of Southern reconstruction in harmony.

³⁸ *International Review*, VIII, 107.

CHAPTER XII

THE OVERTHROW OF THE RECONSTRUCTIONISTS

The reform party insisting upon government by efficient and honest men took courage in Chamberlain's defeat of Whipper's election as judge in 1874 by emphasizing that "in point of ability and legal learning he was not equal to the position."¹ When, however, the legislature elected Whipper, Wiggins, and Moses as circuit judges in 1875, the press had by that time made them so unpopular by charging them with venality and corruption that the whites were aroused almost to an open declaration of war on what they considered the "Ring." The reformers had some hope in the retention of Chamberlain as governor, but gasped at the thought of the return of another administration like that of Scott or that of Moses dominated by the very men who had secured the election of these unpopular persons as judges.

Chamberlain himself saying, "The civilization of the Puritan and Cavalier, of the Roundhead and Huguenot, is imperilled," refused to commission them. Supporting him on this high ground taken, the *News and Courier* denounced Wiggins as a sot, Moses as a white renegade, and Whipper as a black malignant, grouping with them Elliott, whom the editor considered a man of ability and education but not of character. "The election of Whipper, Wiggins, and Moses," said this paper, "unites the State in a common cause." "War is declared upon the honest people of South Carolina, whether conservatives or republicans."² Referring to the same the next day this editor said, "The plan is to organize this South Carolina to make it and keep it a black republic, to put the white man under the foot of the Negro and hold him there."³ The *Columbia Union*

¹ *News and Courier*, December 12, 1874.

² *Ibid.*, December 17, 1875.

³ *Ibid.*, December 18, 1875.

Herald, a Republican organ, said: "From one end of the country to the other South Carolina Republicanism will once more become a stench in the nostrils of men of all parties. This will be deemed of little account at present by the poor fools who have signed the death warrant of the party in the State, but in that near and certain future, when in degradation and despair they learn the bitter lesson of adversity, it will be seen by them that their misfortunes come from themselves. They will see that no man, no party, no state, can resist the awful power of public opinion."

Becoming more militant the *News and Courier* of December 21, 1875, came forward with an editorial saying, "Organize!" "Organize!" "Organize!" "Promises to amend," the editor said, "can no longer be accepted." The people are surfeited with promises; the work of organization cannot begin too soon, the white vote must be polled. "Next year is centennial year. Their special task is to redeem, regenerate and disenthral their people and give them a new natal day from which shall date, a second time, the freedom and independence of South Carolina."

Comments of the press throughout the State were of the same order, as evidenced by the extracts which appeared in the *News and Courier* of December 24th, 1875. From *The Newberry Herald* came the words: "Let every one understand that Moses and Whipper shall not take their seats." *The Abbeville Press and Banner* said: "The election of Thursday is a menace to the good people of the State." *The Kingstree Star* maintained: "It is the most terrible blow we have received since the war." *The Chester Reporter* asserted: "A strict party line has been drawn by the plunderers. They have organized for our destruction. We must now organize for our own preservation." *The Greenville News* reminded the people: "We cannot as a race allow misguided slaves of yesterday in the hands of scoundrels so declared before mankind to rule over us." *The Marion Merchant and Farmer* said: "High taxation is a calamity which is nothing compared to a prostitution of our judicial system, the last and only protection of the

people against tyranny and oppression.” *The Timmons-ville News* joined in the attack: “There is no use trying to compromise with the devil; if you give him an inch he will take an ell. The only safe course is to fight him tooth and toe-nail. . . . We never can compromise with the set of rogues now in power.” *The Marion Star* exclaimed: “Moses and Whipper on the bench! God save our State! God save our people! God save the Union! The Temple of Justice is a mockery!” *The Spartanburg Spartan* said: “Our battle cry will be ‘Down with the robber band!’” *The Abbeville Medium* proclaimed: “The State must be and shall be redeemed.” *The Camden Journal* said: “Nothing can be gained by further compromise, and there is no time to be lost. Let the word be given for the hour has come.”⁴

The refusal of Governor Chamberlain to commission Whipper and Moses as circuit judges, therefore, could not counteract the preponderating influence of the uncompromising element of the Democratic party. The election of these men as judges diminished the influence of the liberal Democrats who opposed a partisan contest over the office of governor in the event of Chamberlain’s renomination. On the other hand, there revived the opposition which the reform character of Chamberlain’s administration had rendered impracticable as attested by the passage of resolutions, in meetings held throughout the State, calling for the reorganization of the Democratic party.

While the question of support or non-support of Chamberlain was agitating the public mind as the result of differences of opinion brought out at both the meeting of the State Democratic Committee and the Republican Convention to elect delegates to their national body, there broke out what has become known as the Hamburg riot. This disturbance, according to the *News and Courier*, was due to the “insolent behavior of a colored militia company in Hamburg on July 4th.” This company, engaged in military formation on the public highway, had failed to break ranks

⁴ *News and Courier*, December 24, 1876.

forthwith so as to permit the immediate passage through their ranks of Thomas Butler and Henry Getzen, two white citizens who were travelling in a vehicle. Legal action brought by the father of one of the aggrieved men developed into a misunderstanding between "Doc." Adams, the captain of the militia company, and General M. C. Butler, counsel for the complainants. Butler soon demanded the surrender of the arms of the militia, which was not acceded to. The refusal resulted in a battle between the militia and a mob of whites who had gathered, and the former were routed by the use of artillery brought from Augusta, Georgia. After the conclusion of the battle and the consequent disarming of the Negroes, five of these were shot down after they had surrendered, bringing the total of Negroes killed up to seven.⁵

Toward this killing of defenseless citizens, the State press was not of a single opinion. The *News and Courier* declared that the conduct of the militia gave to the white citizens neither a legal nor moral right to demand that the former surrender their arms.⁶ The subsequent conduct of

⁵ *Senate Misc. Documents, South Carolina in 1876*, III, 474-476. *Report of Attorney-General of South Carolina.*

⁶ In his public statements General M. C. Butler, whom many regarded as the leader in the massacre, endeavored to explain his personal connection therewith, and in a measure, defended the affair. He was in Hamburg solely on a professional mission. When entering the town he was informed of the excitement prevailing and sought to allay the same. He drove to Augusta on professional business, but in response to inquiries notified the people there that he "thought a collision between the whites and blacks imminent and likely to take place." He remained in Hamburg until "after the firing of the Negroes had ceased," but did not know how the Negroes were killed or how many lost their lives. "This collision," he said, "was the culmination of the system of insulting and outraging of white people which the Negroes had adopted there for several years."

The second statement of General Butler defended the murders on the ground that the Negro officials of the town had harbored thieves and criminals from every direction. They had arrested and fined some of the best and most peaceable citizens for the most trivial offences against their ordinances. Furthermore, "the Negroes had assembled riotously, were in a state of armed resistance to the laws, and any citizen, or number of citizens, had the right to disperse the rioters and suppress the riot, and to use just so much force as was necessary to accomplish it, and if every Negro engaged in the riot had been killed in the suppression, it would have been excusable, if not justifiable."

the mob, according to this organ, was indefensible and unworthy of a civilized Christian State. There concurred likewise in this view the *Marion Star*, the *Chester Reporter* and *Winnsboro News*, which also demanded a judicial investigation of the affair. Yet the *Camden Journal*, while unable to excuse the conduct of the whites, found much to palliate the offence. The whole affair, from its point of view, was chargeable to the radical rule and teach-

Butler could sympathize with those who sought to punish the Negroes because of accumulated wrongs and insults even though he could not approve their means of vindication. His defense, however, depended upon glittering generalities as to "criminal Negroes" by whom the trouble started. He gave few facts.

With respect to this crime, furthermore, the Negroes took a definite stand as attested by their mass meeting in Charleston held on July 17, 1876. Here R. H. Cain, the main speaker of the evening, was again found on the side of law and order. He denounced the riot and declared the right of the Negro to be unmolested so long as his conduct was lawful. Other speakers such as A. J. Ransier and E. J. Adams concurred in this view to the end that resolutions denouncing the massacre and demanding that impartial justice be meted out to the perpetrators of this affair were passed. Likewise there assembled in Columbia at the call of R. B. Elliott a group of representative Negroes who addressed to the country-at-large a communication which stated the law and circumstances relative to the formation of the State militia, reviewed the circumstances of the massacre, attributed thereto a political character, and requested protection from this sort of treatment.

Regarding this matter also, Governor Chamberlain wrote a straightforward letter to President Grant. Although Chamberlain found it "impossible to determine with absolute certainty the motives of those who were engaged in perpetrating the massacre of Hamburg," he believed that "the lines of race and political party were the lines which marked the respective parties to the affair at Hamburg." This he mentioned as a fact and apparently the most trustworthy index of the motives and aims which inspired those who brought on this conflict. As affecting the public peace, however, he regarded the effect of this massacre as more important than the motives that prompted it. It had caused widespread terror and apprehension among the Negroes and Republicans of the State and a consequent feeling of triumph and elation on the part of Democrats and white people. Chamberlain regarded as his first duty to restore and preserve public peace and order that any citizen of the State might freely and safely enjoy all civil rights and privileges, including the right to vote. He desired to know, therefore, whether the General Government would exert itself vigorously to repress violence in South Carolina on the part of persons belonging to either political party, whenever that violence should be beyond the control of the State authorities. See *News and Courier*, July, 1876; *Senate Misc. Docs., South Carolina in 1876*, III, 480-482, 489-496.

ings in South Carolina. Only the *Sumter True Southron*, however, actually condoned the affair. "As usual in all these outbreaks," asserted this journal, "the whites behaved with calmness and moderation. But we solemnly warn the colored people that these things occur too often. The white people of this State do not intend to be ridden over by ignorant and foolish Negroes who lead these riots. We may not be able to carry the state at the ballot box, but when it comes to a trial of the cartridge box we do not entertain any doubt of the result. The whites seek no contest with the colored people, but the latter must behave themselves and submit to the laws which they have made, and to officeholders whom they or their friends have placed in power."⁷

Despite the revolting character of this riotous affair, no proceedings were taken to punish any of the parties who participated therein. A jury empanelled by Prince Rivers, a trial justice in Hamburg, named the persons accused of the murders. The defendants were bound over to appear in Edgefield Court and were present at the appointed time. Yet the case was postponed at the instance of the attorney-general, who advised the governor that the witnesses for the State, mainly Negro citizens of Aiken County, had been alarmed and intimidated by the presence of bodies of armed white men who attended meetings in their neighborhood. Under such circumstances the attendance in court of these witnesses could not be depended on, or even if they were present, they would testify with such fear and reluctance that the value of their testimony would be greatly weakened. Because of this circumstance and the prevailing sentiment of the whites in the community, the perpetrators of this crime were never brought to justice.⁸

The denunciation of the Hamburg affair by the Negroes, the searching analysis of the riot by Governor Chamber-

⁷ *News and Courier*, July 11 and 16, 1876.

⁸ *Communication of Attorney-General Stone to Governor Chamberlain under the date of September 6, 1876.*

lain, the reply thereto of Grant pledging himself to the support of constitutional government in the States by every aid for which he could find law and constitutional power, and the publication by the *News and Courier* of a series of editorial articles in defense of the administration of Governor Chamberlain, were concurrent events that exercised a profound influence upon the sensitive Southern mind.⁹ While the excitement then fomented was high, the Democratic State Convention met at Columbia on the fifteenth day of August. The motive for this action was clearly to determine Democratic policy prior to the meeting of the Republican State Convention. The issue between those who favored the plan of cooperation and those who sought immediate "straight-out" nominations was thus definitely joined. The first test of strength between conflicting party factions resulted in the election of a permanent chairman committed to the "straight-out" policy. Long and exciting speeches were made by General M. C. Butler, General M. W. Gary, Capt. DePass and Capt. J. N. Lipscomb, in favor of immediate "straight-out" nominations, and by Major E. W. Moise, General James Conner and others, in favor of the postponement of nominations. The body decided by a vote of 88 to 64 to nominate candidates for governor and other State offices. Wade Hampton was nominated for governor, W. D. Simpson for lieutenant-governor, R. M. Sims for secretary of state, S. L. Leaphart for treasurer, James Conner for attorney-general, H. S. Thompson for superintendent of education, Johnson Hagood for comptroller-general, and E. W. Moise for adjutant and inspector-general. A. C. Haskell was chosen the chairman of the State Executive Committee.¹⁰

The platform adopted at this convention demanded a genuine and thoroughgoing reform in the State and solicited for that purpose the assistance of all citizens regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. It declared the impossibility of achieving reform through

⁹ *News and Courier*, July 6-18, 1876.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, August 17, 1876.

the Republican party which it arraigned for fomenting race antagonisms, defrauding through the ballot box, venality, corruption and mismanagement of the departments of government. Reaffirming the objective to be reform, retrenchment, and relief so as to reduce taxes and lighten the burdens of the people, the platform guaranteed absolute security to the rights and property of all.¹¹

Governor Chamberlain in the meanwhile had begun an extended tour of the State, making addresses to the electorate in support of the principles and candidates of the National Republican party and in defense of his administration. The first of this series of addresses was delivered in Beaufort on July 16, where a large majority of his auditors were Negroes. There he developed the thesis that the Republican party was the party of freedom, that it had accomplished the destruction of slavery, and, if continued in power, would "cure the evils of the present hour." He reaffirmed that its success in the nation and the State was the certain guaranty of freedom, equal rights and good government. The Governor defended his administration, condemned dishonesty in government and lawlessness, and announced for the first time that he would be a candidate for renomination.¹²

Incidents of this canvass illustrate the temper of those committed to the policy of nominating a "straight-out" ticket of the Democratic party. These, organized in semi-military fashion, armed, and uniformed in red shirts, appeared at Republican meetings, demanding a division of time that Democratic doctrine might be presented to the Negroes from the same platform concurrently with that of the Republicans. Under these circumstances the Democrats enacted a most disgraceful scene at Edgefield. Throughout the tour, moreover, Chamberlain was compelled to submit to this treatment, since a refusal to accede to these demands would have led to bloodshed.^{12a}

¹¹ *News and Courier*, August 18, 1876.

¹² *Ibid.*, July and August, 1876.

^{12a} *Ibid.*, July and August, 1876.

The Republican State Convention met on September 12, 1876. There were several contestants for the party nomination for governor. D. H. Chamberlain, the incumbent, was supported in speeches by Lawrence Cain, S. A. Swails and T. McCants Stewart. He was favored also by Senator John J. Patterson. D. A. Straker, Samuel Lee of Sumter, and B. F. Whittemore made speeches opposing Chamberlain. R. B. Elliott whose speech was awaited with great expectation approved the reforms made under Chamberlain but could not endorse the whole administration. Chamberlain was not, in his opinion, to be trusted. He was inimical to the Negroes' interests as attested by his letter to Niles G. Parker in 1870; he had exceeded his jurisdiction in dealing with Whipper; he appointed none but whites to the Board of Centennial Commissioners; his dispatch to the New England Society had rebuked the Negroes; and he had courted Democracy. Elliott was, therefore, opposed to Chamberlain's renomination and urged the nomination of T. C. Dunn. Chamberlain defended his course to the satisfaction of the convention and won the nomination by a vote of 88 to 35 against all competitors.¹³ R. H. Gleaves was nominated for lieutenant-governor, H. E. Hayne for secretary of state, F. L. Cardoza for treasurer; R. B. Elliott for attorney-general; T. C. Dunn for comptroller-general; James Kennedy for adjutant and inspector-general, and John B. Tolbert for superintendent of education.

The party platform denied the charges of the Democrats and pledged a thorough reform in all departments of government. Specific reforms promised related to maintaining inviolate the bonded debt of the State as already adjusted; the biennial convening of the legislature for a period not to exceed 70 days; the modification of the veto power so that it might affect parts of acts; and the reduction of taxation, the cost of printing, salaries, the number of offices, and the fees of attorneys in civil cases. The platform also pledged the establishment of a specific tax for the

¹³ *News and Courier*, September 15, 1876.

support of free schools and a reduction of the number of sessions of the Court of General Sessions and Common Pleas.¹⁴

The campaign which ensued was bitterly fought. Proposals for joint discussions between Hampton and Chamberlain by A. C. Haskell, chairman of the Democratic State Executive Committee, were accepted on behalf of the Republicans by R. B. Elliott, but the purposes of these debates were defeated through the belated divergence of the Democrats from the terms agreed upon. The character of the campaign was not essentially changed.¹⁵ Both political parties made special pleas for the support of the Negroes. Hampton devoted much energy to winning their confidence. He declared that the Democrats recognized the changes in the constitution and in the institutions of the country as accomplished facts and that they proposed to obey the law as good citizens. He was to know "no party, no race, no color or condition" if elected governor. This office would be used to render to the whole people of the State impartial justice. The rights of all would be respected and, furthermore, to the colored man, he promised more work and better schools.¹⁶

The response to Hampton's promise was encouraging. Martin R. Delany was one of the first Negro leaders to declare in favor of Hampton, whom he considered a just, true, dependable man. The press reported the statewide formation of colored Democratic clubs which were stimulated in part by Democratic recognition of Negroes on certain county tickets, in districts which they knew they could not carry, and in part by the schism within the Republican party. The widespread Republican opposition to Chamberlain was difficult to counteract. Besides, the Republican leaders exhibited in this crucial campaign a certain helplessness that did not escape the observation of the

¹⁴ *News and Courier*, September 15, 1876.

¹⁵ *Senate Misc. Documents, 1876-1877; South Carolina in 1876*, III, 563-569.

¹⁶ Quoted in *Senate Misc. Doc., 1876-1877; South Carolina in 1876*, III, 454-459.

average voter. These circumstances doubtless caused many Negroes to view the Hampton ticket favorably.

Yet two of Hampton's main supporters were General M. C. Butler, whose hands were considered stained with the blood of the victims of the Hamburg massacre, and General Martin Gary who preached that this is a white man's country and must remain so.¹⁷ Furthermore, the campaign developed influences that must have logically counteracted any determination of the Negroes to vote the Democratic ticket. The lawless spirit so prevalent in 1870 and 1871 gained the ascendancy again. A Negro legislator was killed in Darlington County, two freedmen were lynched in Marlboro, and six in Edgefield. Three bloody riots arose directly or indirectly from political causes. The first occurred in Charleston on September 6, 1876. Here white Democrats were reported to have assisted colored political associates who were attacked by Republican Negroes. Several Negroes were shot, and in a few instances whites were injured. On September 17, there occurred at Ellenton a riot of some consequence, reported to have been caused by the attempted assault and robbery of a white woman by two Negroes. This affray resulted in the death of 2 white men and 15 Negroes. The third riot happened at Cainho, Charleston County, in connection with a Democratic political meeting. Conflicting accounts of the origin make it difficult to state who were the aggressors. The results, however, were conclusive. Six white men and one Negro were reported killed and sixteen white men reported wounded.¹⁸

There appeared in the *New York Tribune* of October 14, 1876, a graphic pen description of the campaign in South Carolina, especially in relation to the use of methods of intimidation to secure votes for the Democratic candidates. The writer purported to be a white native who was not a Republican. His account is supported by many others who

¹⁷ *International Review*, VIII, 111.

¹⁸ *News and Courier*, Sept.-Oct. 1876. *Senate Misc. Doc.*, 1876-1877. *South Carolina in 1876*, I, II, III.

were in South Carolina at that time. The letter ran in part:

“ The air is filled with reports of outrages and murders which never appear in print. No prominent Republican of either color can safely leave a town. Let a hint that he intends to ride out into the country get wind and he is sure to be ambuscaded. But more than this. The whites regard a Republican of their color with tenfold the vindictiveness with which they look upon the Negro. Scores of white Republicans are hurrying in alarm to the newspaper offices to insert cards in which they renounce their party and profess conversion to Democracy. If these men hang back and refuse or neglect to join the precinct club or the nearest military company, their conduct is reported to the township meeting. A committee is appointed to request an explanation. They call on the suspected man at their earliest convenience. If he is sensible, he will submit profuse apologies and regrets, and hurriedly take up his rifle and follow them to the drill-room. Three or four white circuit judges have been dragooned into conformity, and the crowd of lesser lights threaten to absorb every white Republican in the State, except Governor Chamberlain and the United States Senators.” . . .

“ If a white man refuses to join a precinct club, if a white man's loyalty to the party is suspected, if a white Republican persists in his opinions, he is spotted, marked, doomed. He is scowled at if he walks abroad. If he passes a crowd of loitering whites at a street corner, an ominous silence falls on them till he is out of hearing. No warning is given him. No midnight visits are now paid, or Ku-Klux missives despatched. The whites have found by bitter experience that such things are boomerangs, which return with tenfold force to injure the thrower. They manage the matter better now. They wait till an obnoxious man whom they have doomed as a victim chances to stand, or pass near them, say on the public square, at post-office, in a bar-room, on the street. A crowd of white desperadoes will cluster near him or follow him. They appear to be drunk, and begin to quarrel over some silly matter having nothing to do with politics. Several bystanders come up and take sides. Finally blows are exchanged, pistols drawn, and a regular free fight occurs. Shots are fired by all the party. Yet, strange to say, when order is restored, it is found that not one of the combatants is injured,

while the poor Republican has been struck by several random shots and killed. An account of the affray appears in the press (the press is almost wholly Democratic) under the heading, 'Street Row—One Man Killed.' Not only are single men picked off in this way, but sham fights are arranged by white ruffians on some non-political pretence, which swell to the proportion of riots, and in which several Republican bystanders are killed by chance shots, while none of the combatants are hurt. Of course the authors of these deeds go unpunished. In the first place, it is impossible to tell who fired the shot. Then it is unsafe for any one to indict anybody about it, or for officials to be too zealous in investigating or prosecuting. But if an assassin does get into trouble by imprudence, his comrades, who of course compose most of the bystanders, are called as witnesses, and swear him out safely by giving in doctored testimony."

Dr. H. V. Redfield, a Northern correspondent whose letter to the *Cincinnati Commercial* was republished in the *News and Courier*, commented thus on the situation: "The outsider is apt to be puzzled by accounts of affairs here. He may not understand the formation of 'rifle clubs,' 'rifle trains,' artillery companies, among the whites. What are they afraid of? They are not afraid of anything. Why then, this arming? They intend to carry this election, if it is possible to do so. The programme is to have 'rifle clubs' all over the State, and, while avoiding actual bloodshed as much as possible, to so impress the blacks that they, or a number of them, will feel impelled to vote with the whites out of actual fear. The blacks are timid by nature, timid by habit, timid by education. A display of force unnerves them. The whites understand this, and an immense marching about at night, and appearances at any Republican meeting to 'divide time' is with a view to impress the blacks with a sense of danger of longer holding out against white rule. Add to the number they can secure, the number they can buy, and they hope to have enough, united with the solid white vote, to gain the day, elect Hampton, and secure the Legislature." ¹⁹

Another reporter observed that in 1876 the State closely

¹⁹ *News and Courier*, 1876.

resembled a military camp. "In twelve hours," said he, "as many as forty thousand armed men could be assembled."²⁰ The Fort Moultrie Centennial was made the occasion of the parade of thousands of Confederate soldiers to revive the ante-bellum spirit, fire-eating speeches were made while hostile troops from Georgia, attending the celebration, contemptuously demeaned themselves toward Negro guardians of peace. Then followed various murders of Negroes. Recognizing this probable beginning of warfare, the whites were urged by their leaders to buy arms, and form additional rifle clubs and mounted companies. To force the native into these organizations there was introduced a system of brow-beating and challenging such persons to duel. The degraded whites in the disorderly counties readily accepted this policy in toto, where they had things their way already. Where they were in the minority more prudence was exercised to prevent any injury to the Tilden ticket in the North and to obviate the necessity of the interference of Federal troops by having reports of this disorder noised abroad.²¹

Speaking of the Wade Hampton campaign itself a South Carolinian said: "Such delirium as they aroused can be paralleled only by itself even in this delirious State. Their whole tour was a vast triumphal procession; at every depot they were received by a tremendous concourse of citizens and escorts of cavalry. Their meetings drew the whole white population, male and female (for the ladies turned out by tens of thousands to greet and listen to the heroic Hampton), for scores of miles around, and had to be held invariably in the open air. They were preceded by processions of the rifle clubs, mounted and on foot, miles in length, marching amidst the strains of music and the booming of cannon; at night there were torchlight processions equally imposing. The speakers aroused in thousands the memories of old, and called on their hearers to

²⁰ *International Review*, VIII, 110.

²¹ *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 183; *Senate Misc. Docs.*, 1876-1877; *South Carolina in 1876*, III. 89-90, 622, 625, 632-639.

redeem the grand old State and restore it to its ancient place of honor in the republic. The wildest cheering followed. The enthusiasm, as Confederate veterans pressed forward to wring their old general's hand, was indescribable. Large columns of mounted men escorted the canvassers from place to place while off the railroad. They were entertained at the houses of leading citizens, held receptions attended by all the wealth, intelligence, and brilliance of the community, and used all the vast social power they possessed to help on the work."²²

The Negroes were unusually stirred up by these movements. Near the election long lines of cavalry were kept constantly parading and proved particularly effective on the Negroes. The effect was intensified by the horrors of the massacre at Ellenton. The whites assumed a dictatorial demeanor toward the Negroes. They were threatened with ambuscades by bullies, if they took legal action against them; and in the case of disorders the natives secured hundreds of false affidavits as they already had at Hamburg and Ellenton to exonerate the whites who murdered the Negroes. They easily placed the responsibility for all violence on the Republicans while professing reconciliation to the war measures which guaranteed the civil and political rights of the Negro. As the promises of the Democrats did not induce a sufficient number of Negroes to join their party the whites resorted to the method of dismissing from their service Negro laborers who persisted in remaining Republican. This economic pressure caused some Negroes, then, to join the ranks of the Democrats.²³

A coup d'état for election day was contemplated. It was prearranged with rifle clubs to guard the polls and systematically patrol the roads so as to keep the Negroes at home and frighten them away from the polls. This was counteracted, however, by the governor's proclamation ordering that there be disbanded all rifle clubs which he had accepted as militia. This precipitated a crisis which some

²² *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXIX, 183-184.

²³ *Ibid.*, 184.

thought might develop into bloody war on the State government, but better counsel prevailed and the proclamation was apparently submitted to while the same purpose was accomplished indirectly. Furthermore, the United States troops were brought into the State to garrison every important town.

Negroes, too, having become excited purchased guns and ammunition to the extent that their means would permit and prepared to shoot and to apply the torch in their effort to resist aggression. They began, moreover, to maltreat and intimidate those Negroes who had gone over to the Democratic party. This very thing caused the riot in Charleston referred to above. Negroes then became emboldened to attend their meetings which prior to this time had been prevented. Coming armed, as was their policy thereafter, there followed some collisions. One observer said that their orators advised them to cut the throats of white women and children, if the shotgun policy were continued, and to apply the torch to the dwelling of any man who discharged them on account of politics. The result was an unusual increase of crime beyond the proportion of any other time.

The coming of the troops, however, and the retaliation of the Negroes did not deter the whites. They handled the situation diplomatically. Changing their attitude toward the Federal army, they loudly welcomed the troops and entertained the officers in their homes to keep up appearances. The troops, moreover, had probably saved them from some attacks at the hands of the Negroes. The whites set a day of prayer and fasting for the restoration of the State to their hands and continued the policy of dismissing from their service Negroes who refused to cooperate with them politically. When a Negro desired to rent lands they inquired as to whether he would vote for Hampton. Furthermore, they instituted what is known as the "one man a piece policy." Every white possible was induced to pledge himself to secure at least one Negro to vote for Hampton either by fair or foul means and watch him deposit his bal-

lot. "Thousands of Negroes," said a South Carolinian, "had liens on their crops released, land rented to them at nothing, supplies promised for next year, and many paid them outright in consideration of their turning Democrats, or by staying away from the polls." ²⁴

"The election," according to this South Carolinian, "was one of the greatest farces ever seen. In counties where the Negroes had terrorized affairs, streams of colored republicans poured from poll to poll all day, voting everywhere. The largest vote ever cast before in Charleston County had been twenty thousand. Yet on election day, although three or four thousand Negroes were bribed or led by fear of starvation to refrain from voting, and although five or six hundred who did vote cast the Democratic ticket, the total vote thrown reached the amazing figure of 23,891 and the county went Republican by 6,391 votes—six thousand having been the average majority in the past.

"In counties terrorized by the whites, white braves rode from poll to poll, and voted time and again. Hundreds of Georgians and North Carolinians crossed the borders and joined in the work. In Edgefield County the influx of Georgians and the repeating were simply tremendous. The total number of voters in that county, according to the recent state census (which was denounced as exaggerating the population by the democratic press, because the census takers were paid by a fee of five cents for every name recorded instead of by a salary), is 7,122, and the county has always, hitherto, gone republican by one thousand votes; yet, although a thousand Negroes certainly, and an unknown number above that, were induced by money or fear of starvation to refrain from voting, the total number of votes cast was 9,289, and the democrats carried the county by the astounding and tell-tale majority of 3,225! Similarly startling in most of the counties were the changes as compared with the census or past elections. Every democrat with whom I have talked since election day

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 187.

has something of this sort to say: 'Why, the Negroes at my precinct repeated and voted their minors on a tremendous scale; for their total vote was almost as high as ever before, although we kept away fifty or sixty from voting and got about a dozen to vote with us. Why, I carried one Negro to the polls myself, and saw him put in his ballot all right, and his two brothers stayed at home all day, for I told them if they voted against us I would turn them off.' ''²⁵

There can be little doubt that fraud and intimidation were quite generally resorted to by both parties. In several counties, especially in Edgefield and Laurens, Republican Negroes were arrested on frivolous charges and driven away from the polls. One hundred fifty Republicans were denied the right to vote at New Hope Church alone. The Democrats were also accused of fraudulent voting by repeating the same man from poll to poll, in Oconee, Newberry, Fairfield, Greenville and other counties. The Democrats charged the Republicans with similar fraud in Chester, Beaufort, Orangeburg, Richland and the Santee district of Georgetown County. With a few exceptions the vote of practically every county was protested to the Board of State Canvassers. It was shown furthermore that 6,782 whites in excess of the number reported in the census²⁶ of the white eligibles voted in this election. At the same time the vote of the Negroes was 6,980 less than that of the census of Negro voters.

The result of the election was not immediately known. The returns from the whole State were required by law to be canvassed, and the result disclosed by a Board of State Canvassers composed of the state treasurer, the comptroller-general, the secretary of state, the attorney-general and the adjutant and inspector-general. There was vested in the board the judicial powers to hear protests and determine the legality of the election of all candidates except

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 187.

²⁶ *Senate Mis. Docs.*, 1876-1877, *South Carolina in 1876*, III, 1-54; 84, 98-99; 117-213.

that of the governor and the lieutenant-governor, the vote for whom had to be canvassed by the General Assembly after the organization of that body. The Board of State Canvassers was, furthermore, required to meet on the third day after the election and to conclude its work within ten days.²⁷

The face of the returns gave the control of the State government to the Democrats, and notwithstanding the reported frauds in Edgefield and Laurens, the electoral vote to Rutherford B. Hayes for president. Since the elections in Edgefield and Laurens counties where Democratic candidates were given majorities were contested, and, in view of the personnel of the Board of State Canvassers, all the members of which were Republicans, and three candidates for reelection as State officers, the Democrats sought to prevent the Board of State Canvassers from exercising judicial powers lest the protests be decided to the detriment of the Democrats.

The objections of the Democrats elicited from the Board the declaration that they proposed to exercise their right to hear protests as to the electors for the President and Vice-President, and of members of Congress, and they further declared it to be their opinion that the secretary of state, comptroller-general and state treasurer were authorized to sit as members of the Board, to hear and determine all questions coming before them except that neither of these officers should vote upon his own election.

Proceedings were forthwith instituted against the Board before the Supreme Court of the State to require the Board to exercise ministerial powers only with respect to the canvass of the State returns. As the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court F. J. Moses, Sr., was one of Chamberlain's bitter enemies, the Republicans felt apprehensive as to the action of that tribunal. Specifically the Court was asked first, to compel the Board of State Canvassers to perform merely the function of ascertaining from the returns of the county canvassers what persons had the highest number of votes, and to certify the statements thereof to

²⁷ *Acts*, 1869-1870.

the secretary of state; second, to prohibit the Board from hearing any protest or contest, and from exercising any judicial functions with respect to the election.²⁸

The Court granted the order of the complainants requiring that the Board should show cause why it should not be compelled and restrained according to the prayers of the complainants, but did not grant the order restraining the Board from proceeding, pending action on the prayers. Upon the receipt of the statement of the Board voicing compliance with the order of the Court, counsel for the Democrats asked the Court to require the Board to certify to be correct the statement of the whole number of votes for members of the General Assembly, and to determine and declare what persons have been by the greatest number of votes elected to such offices. The Board should further make a certificate of this result and deliver it to the secretary of state, who would be required to transmit the same to persons declared to be elected. The same procedure was demanded where members of Congress were concerned. The Court was also asked to require the Board to surrender to the Court all official documents showing the nature and character of errors and irregularities.

The Court did not at once grant these orders, but on November 22, the day when the powers of the Board to act would expire, issued a writ of peremptory mandamus directed to the Board of State Canvassers and the secretary of state commanding them forthwith to declare duly elected and issue certificates to the persons who received the greatest number of votes for the offices of senator and member of the house of representatives. The secretary of state was required furthermore to issue a copy of this record to the governor and cause a copy to be printed in one or more newspapers of the state.

In the meanwhile the Board of State Canvassers which had obeyed the sole mandate of the Court received, with but

²⁸ Proceedings of the Supreme Court in this case are found in the Memorial to Congress of D. H. Chamberlain, R. H. Gleaves, etc. See also *South Carolina Reports Book 33, November 1876*.

a brief period of legal existence remaining wherein to comply with the statute, met at 10 o'clock on the morning of November 22, to complete their duties. They corrected certain clerical errors, referred to in their statement to the Court as regarded the counting of votes cast for T. C. Dunn and John R. Tolbert, and failed to certify as elected the persons who had received the greatest number of votes in Edgefield and Laurens counties for seats in the lower house of the General Assembly. The Board thus defeated the apparent efforts of the Supreme Court to constitute itself the only body legally entitled to declare the results of the election.

As a result of this action the Court had all members of the Board imprisoned for contempt in that they had not obeyed the Court's order of November 22d. Yet, the Board had but exercised its duty as authorized by law, in the absence of any order communicated to them enjoining them from the performance of that duty. Some days later, the fall term of the United States Circuit Court began at Columbia. The Judge of that Court was petitioned for a writ of habeas corpus, commanding the Sheriff of Richland County, under whose jurisdiction the prisoners were, to bring the latter before that Judge that an inquiry might be made into the cause of their detention. The Federal Court was declared to have jurisdiction over the case by virtue of a Federal Statute which extended the privileges of the writ of habeas corpus to persons "in custody for an act done or omitted in pursuance of a law of the United States." This act was embraced therein since the Board of State Canvassers was authorized by law to determine the rights of certain persons to be electors for the President and Vice-President of the United States. The desired relief was granted.

For some days prior to the convening of the legislature, set for November 28th, there existed much apprehension among the bold leaders of both parties. The refusal of the Board of State Canvassers to honor the election returns from Edgefield and Laurens counties on account of re-

ported irregularities and fraud constituted, in effect, a declaration that the elections in those counties were null and void. The matter was of grave importance, since the Democrats were prevented by this stand from organizing the lower house of the legislature. As the matter stood, certificates of election to the House had been legally issued to 57 Democrats and 59 Republicans. The eight seats to which Edgefield and Laurens counties were entitled were vacant. At the same time, the Senate with two vacancies had a Republican majority of five.

As a precaution against violence which the state of public feeling might easily have precipitated, the President of the United States, in response to a call for aid to maintain republican government in the State against resistance too formidable to be overcome by State authorities, authorized Federal forces to sustain Governor Chamberlain in his authority against domestic violence until otherwise directed. The action of the President was instantly protested by citizens and the press of the State, insisting that peace prevailed in Columbia and throughout the State. No resistance to the law was contemplated, they averred, and the use of troops, therefore, would be unwarranted.²⁹

The legislature met on Tuesday, November 28th, at noon. The proceedings of the House were attended by much confusion, and but for the presence of the Federal troops might have resulted in violence. The Democratic members marched down to the State House accompanied by General Wade Hampton and Col. A. C. Haskell. The persons claiming to be elected from Edgefield and Laurens counties were refused admission to the House, whereupon one of the Edgefield claimants read a prepared protest against this act signed by all the Democratic members including those claiming election from Laurens and Edgefield.³⁰

The excitement of the proceedings had drawn before the State House a restive crowd to which General Hampton

²⁹ *News and Courier*, November 28, 1876.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, November 29, 1876.

appealed for order and peace in response to the request of Federal officers. Shortly thereafter the Democratic members with one exception withdrew to another hall and organized as a House of Representatives. Meanwhile the Republican members entered the hall of the State House and proceeded to organize by electing as speaker, E. W. M. Mackey of Charleston, and other officers including A. O. Jones as clerk. The sixty members of this body, including General Wallace, a Democrat of Union, constituted a majority of all the members elected, since the House then consisted of 116 members, rather than 124 in view of the declared invalidity of the election in Edgefield and Laurens counties.³¹

The Senate was organized with Lieutenant-Governor R. H. Gleaves, presiding. The Democrats took no active part in the organization. The senators from Edgefield and Laurens were in their seats; but not being recognized, they did not vote. The Senate elected S. A. Swails, president pro tempore. Protests were made against the members from Aiken and Barnwell on the ground that they were elected by force and fraud.³²

On November 30th, the whole body of persons constituting the Democratic House of Representatives marched to the State Capitol and effected an entrance into the House of Representatives while the legislature was in session. The speaker of the Democratic House sought to assume the chair. A wild scene ensued while both bodies undertook to control the proceedings. As a result of this happening, the Democratic speaker was notified by General Ruger, commanding the United States military forces in Columbia, that the claimants from Edgefield would not be permitted upon the floor of the House at twelve o'clock the next day. This order was protested by Hampton, Haskell, and United States Senator John B. Gordon, of Georgia, who communicated with President Grant over the matter. Ruger defended his action, holding that it was his duty to

³¹ *Ibid.*, November 29, 1876.

³² *Ibid.*, November 29, 1876.

refuse admission to persons claiming the right of entrance under the certificates granted by the Supreme Court. The Democrats subsequently retired from the House in the Capitol on the fourth of December.³³

On the fifth of December the Republican House and Senate sitting in joint session canvassed the vote for governor and lieutenant-governor. The vote reported from Edgefield and Laurens counties was not counted. The result of the canvass indicated that D. H. Chamberlain had received 86,216 votes against 83,071 cast for Wade Hampton in the contest for governor. The election of R. H. Gleaves as lieutenant-governor over W. D. Simpson was reported by a vote of 86,620 to 82,521. The canvass, furthermore, disclosed irregularities in the returns of other counties. The votes of such counties were not thrown out, but upon the representation of the proper committee, seats theretofore certified to Democrats were, in some instances, given to Republicans.³⁴

As a consequence of the declaration of his election, Chamberlain was inaugurated as Governor on December 7th. In the inaugural address, which was brief and concise, the Governor omitted any recommendation relating to the public affairs, but committed himself to oppose without abatement what he considered the effort then being made to thwart the political will of the majority in South Carolina. He denounced the conduct of his political opponents in the late election in the State which he declared was characterized by the use of fraud, proscription, intimidation in all forms, and violence ranging through all degrees up to wanton murder. His chief public care, he said, was to contribute his utmost efforts to defend the rights, guard the peace and promote the welfare of the people of South Carolina.³⁵

Proceedings had been begun in the Supreme Court of the State in the meanwhile to secure its decision as to which

³³ *Ibid.*, December 1 and 5, 1876.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, December 6, 1876.

³⁵ *House Journal, 1876-1877; News and Courier*, December 8, 1876.

of the two bodies claiming to be the House of Representatives was the lawful House. The effort was made to compel H. E. Hayne, the secretary of state, to deliver to W. H. Wallace, speaker of the Democratic House, the returns of the vote for governor and lieutenant-governor. By the decision of the Court Wallace was declared the legal speaker of the lawfully constituted House of Representatives of the State, and as such he was entitled to the possession of the returns of the late election for governor and lieutenant-governor.

This decision was based on the grounds that the House of Representatives consisted of 124 members and 63 were necessary for a quorum to do business. Sixty-three members were in their seats when Wallace was elected. All of these members had certificates of election from the secretary of state except eight, and the qualification of these had been established by the proceedings in that Court. Furthermore, regardless of the character of the certificates, the returns of the Board of State Canvassers to the Court showing that they had received the greatest number of votes in their particular counties entitled them to access to the floor for the purpose of organization.³⁶

On December 14th, the House declared to be the legal body, sitting in joint session with the Democratic Senators, canvassed the election returns for governor and lieutenant-governor. These returns included the disputed vote of Edgefield and Laurens counties. As a result of these findings, Hampton was declared to have received 92,261 votes as compared with 91,127 votes cast for Chamberlain for governor. W. D. Simpson was declared elected as lieutenant-governor over R. H. Gleaves by a vote of 91,689 to 91,150.

Hampton was forthwith inaugurated as governor. His speech delivered on that occasion just prior to taking the oath of office embraced a review of the circumstances of the last campaign, a denunciation of the late corrupt recon-

³⁶ *South Carolina Reports, Wallace V. Hayne*, November 1876 to November 1877.

struction rule and a reaffirmation to observe the pledges to which the Conservatives had committed themselves during the campaign. These consisted briefly of pledges to recognize the amendments of the constitution and accept them in good faith; to work for reform and establish good government; to maintain an efficient system of public education; to regard both races and parties as equals in the eye of the law; and to protect all in the enjoyment of every political right then possessed by them.³⁷

Action had been taken about the same time also to enjoin perpetually from expending State funds, F. L. Cardoza, the Republican candidate for State Treasurer. Likewise on the eighteenth of December, Hampton formally demanded Chamberlain to surrender to him the great seal of the State, and the possession of the State House, together with all public records and other matters, and things appertaining to the office of governor. To this demand, Chamberlain refused to accede, since he recognized in Hampton no right to make the same.³⁸

During this period of indecision "the legislatures" undertook the election of a United States Senator to succeed T. J. Robertson on March 4, 1877. The Republican House acting with a majority of the Senate elected David T. Corbin as a United States Senator on December 12th. Several days later, the Democratic House together with the Democratic Senators elected General M. C. Butler as the United States Senator by a total of 64 votes out of 79 cast.³⁹

The Senate and both lower Houses adjourned on December 22d. At this time congressional committees were in South Carolina investigating the conditions and circumstances of the late election. There issued from these investigations certain official reports which, considered in connection with memorials presented by the interested parties to Congress, vested the decision as to the legal gov-

³⁷ *News and Courier*, December, 1876.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, December 19, 1876.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, December 20, 1876.

ernment of the State in the authority of the United States Government. The memorial of Wade Hampton and the Democratic contestants for office was presented to the Senate by Senator John B. Gordon of Georgia on December 29, 1876.⁴⁰ On January 16th, Senator John J. Patterson presented to the Senate of the United States "the memorial of D. H. Chamberlain and R. H. Gleaves, and other officers of the State government of South Carolina, addressed to the Congress of the United States." This was followed by a resolution offered by Senator Patterson requesting the Federal Government to recognize and sustain, by lawful means, if necessary, the legal government of South Carolina, represented by D. H. Chamberlain and his co-petitioners.^{40a} To the Chamberlain memorial, Hampton and his associates claiming election replied, attacking the positions taken by their adversaries.

The failure of Congress to act on these petitions placed the matter of determining the legal government of South Carolina in the hands of the national executive. The uncertainty of the State issue was thus increased, since the contested national election of 1876 remained undecided until shortly before the date set for the inauguration. The decision of the Electoral Commission in the favor of Governor Hayes for the presidency was not reassuring to the cause of D. H. Chamberlain and the Republicans in South Carolina. Correspondence had passed between intimates of the new president and ardent supporters of the Democrats in South Carolina, which gave credence to the prevalent belief that Hayes would make possible the accession of Hampton to power. Furthermore the new president declared in his inaugural address that he would put forth his best efforts in behalf of a civil policy which would forever wipe out in the public affairs of the nation the color line and the distinction between north and south, to the end that a united country might be made possible.

⁴⁰ *Congressional Record*, December 4, 1876-January 23, 1877, 388-389.

^{40a} *Ibid.*, December 4, 1876-January 23, 1877, 635-645, 647.

Following the inauguration of President Hayes both Hampton and Chamberlain made representations to the president of the state of affairs in South Carolina. In considering these communications the president invited the contestants to Washington for interviews. The decision of the president and the cabinet with reference to this matter turned on the constitutional right of the general government to intrude the army into the official headquarters of a State government, except to quell riot or suppress domestic disturbance when the government of the State was powerless to protect itself. The unanimous decision of the body was that the Federal Government had no such right. Furthermore, the cabinet held that, in their opinion, the exception did not then apply to South Carolina. It was therefore determined unanimously to withdraw the Federal troops from the State House.⁴¹

The decision was communicated to the interested parties, stating that the Federal troops would be withdrawn from the State House on April 10, 1877. Pursuant to the official orders of the president to the proper officers, the withdrawal of the troops was consummated on April 10th, at 12 o'clock noon. Meanwhile necessary arrangements were made between Chamberlain and Hampton for the transfer of records and property belonging to the executive office. On April 11, 1877, at noon, Wade Hampton assumed the undisputed possession of the office of governor of the State of South Carolina. The Republican claimants for the several State offices likewise discontinued the contest, and the Hampton Administration was in full possession of the State government by the first of May.

⁴¹ *New York Times*, April 3, 1877.

CHAPTER XIII

CORRUPTION EXPOSED TO JUSTIFY INTIMIDATION

The Hampton government was then anxious to present its case to the State and nation. To do this it must first obtain complete control of all branches of the government. The General Assembly, therefore, was convened in special session on April 24, 1877. Two days later that body received from Governor Hampton a message embracing general observations on the "deplorable" condition of the State's finances and recommending that the valid bonded and floating indebtedness of the State be ascertained prior to the payment of interest on any outstanding obligations. Other recommendations related to a reorganization of the State penal and charitable institutions, and of the State University that they might better serve the purposes for which they were intended. The message urged that the free common school system be supported and made equally accessible to all citizens, regardless of race or economic status, but emphasized the necessity of reducing the rate of taxation.¹

In connection with the prosecution of the plans broadly outlined by Governor Hampton, the majority party in the legislature undertook to secure the complete domination of that body. Besides, they changed the political complexion of the supreme court and judicial circuits. With respect to legislative changes, the House excluded therefrom those members who, having sat with the "Republican House" after the election of 1876, refused to "purge themselves of contempt" as required by the representatives. E. W. M. Mackey of Charleston and D. A. Straker of Orangeburg were unseated in favor of their Democratic opponents. In the Senate, the Democratic claimants from Aiken, Abbeville, Barnwell, Edgefield, and Laurens coun-

¹ *House Journal*, 1877.

ties were seated over the Republicans, three of whom withdrew their protests. These were Lawrence Cain, T. N. Tolbert, and E. P. Stoney who defaulted by not appearing before the Senate committee on privileges and elections. Senator D. I. Walker of Chester resigned early in the session and the resignation of B. F. Whittemore became effective when the session closed.² When the regular session of 1877-1878 convened, furthermore, Senators S. A. Swails, Samuel Green, H. J. Maxwell, J. D. Harley, H. C. Corwin, S. E. Gaillard, and W. B. Nash submitted resignations to become effective immediately. They were replaced by Democratic members. Similar withdrawals from the House had likewise served to increase the Democratic majority in that body.³

Democratic control of the Judiciary was similarly obtained. The death of F. J. Moses, Sr., Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, secured the promotion of Associate Justice Willard to that position. The vacancy was filled by Henry McIver, a prominent Democrat of Chesterfield. There remained Associate Justice J. J. Wright whose official conduct was made the subject of a secretly conducted investigation which brought against him the charge of drunkenness. As a result of this charge, Justice Wright was impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors, and formally requested to resign. Upon his compliance with this request, the impeachment proceedings were forthwith discontinued. Justice Wright was succeeded by A. C. Haskell who had been the Chairman of the Democratic State Executive Committee during the late campaign.^{3a}

Changes in the Judicial Circuits were based on technical grounds in every case except one. The reelection of Judge R. B. Carpenter in 1875 was held to be without constitutional authority in that the legislature of that year was unauthorized to elect a circuit judge for a term to commence during the legislative session of 1876-1877. Judge

² *House and Senate Journals, Special Session, 1877.*

³ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878.

^{3a} *Ibid.*, 1877; 1877-1878.

Carpenter was succeeded by General J. B. Kershaw, one of the leading Democrats in the State. Judge Northrop who resigned was succeeded by W. H. Wallace, who was, at that time, the speaker of the House of Representatives. The remaining judges, exclusive of Wallace and Kershaw, were declared to have been illegally elected since they had been elected by a "viva voce" vote rather than by ballot. The following elections resulted in the reelection of A. J. Shaw and T. J. Mackey, who had been a Republican. The new judges were Democrats.⁴

Concurrently with these changes, the General Assembly authorized investigations to discredit the reconstruction government. Commissions were appointed to ascertain the bonded and floating indebtedness of the State; and a third was required to investigate the sale of the Columbia Canal. A joint committee was authorized to ascertain whether any funds of the State had been expended for illegal purposes during the preceding administrations. It was instructed, furthermore, to regain possession of State property illegally alienated and to ascertain whether John J. Patterson had procured his election to the United States Senate through bribery and corruption. The conduct of David T. Corbin was investigated in connection with certain transactions performed by him for the State.

Much of the reconstruction legislation was either repealed or fundamentally amended.⁵ Many of these measures related directly to the expenditure of the State or local funds. Thus passed away the act which required certain counties to grant relief to the widows and orphans of persons killed because of their political opinions; the act to provide for the payment of past due school claims in the several counties and the free scholarships in the State University.⁶ There were repealed also the act establishing a school in the State penitentiary, and the measure reorganiz-

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1877; 1877-1878.

⁵ *Acts*, 1877; 1877-1878.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1877; 1877-1878.

ing the State University and State Normal School on the basis of the coeducation of the races. The provision of equal educational advantages to white and colored youth was guaranteed.⁷

Besides the measures repealed, certain legislation was so amended as to effect significant changes especially as related to public expenditures with respect to the compensation of public officers. Numerous changes were made in the criminal law so as to increase the severity of penalties. Thus the crimes of arson and rape hitherto punishable by imprisonment were made punishable by death. Burglary at common law was to be punished by imprisonment for life, and the theft of live stock was to be punished by imprisonment from one year to ten years.

The victory of these opponents of reconstruction gave them the long desired opportunity to investigate the oft-repeated charges of incompetence and corruption.⁸ Having finally eliminated sufficient Republicans to have a working majority in both branches of the legislature, they could proceed without hindrance. The first result of their inquiry had to do with the multifarious obligations of the State. On March 31, 1877, the funded public debt of South Carolina, as stated by the commission charged with this investigation, was \$4,396,290.41. This was the amount of consolidation bonds and stock outstanding, represented by vouchers in the treasurer's office in the sum of \$8,792,779.00. These vouchers to the amount of \$3,608,717, in the judgment of the commission, were not issued in accordance with law and were not properly authorized to be consolidated under the act reducing the volume of the public debt. Among the classes of bonds therein represented were \$1,066,005 issued for the relief of the treasury, \$1,049,440 of the second issue to pay the interest on the public debt and \$294,059 of conversion bonds.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1877; 1877-1878.

⁸ The Joint Committee appointed to Investigate Frauds comprised John R. Cochran, chairman, and Henry A. Meetze of the Senate; and Gerhard Muller, J. G. Blue and S. Dibble of the House.

The commission reported the amount of hypothecated bonds and coupons not issued in accordance with law as \$2,166,039. These included \$1,040,360 issued for the relief of the treasury, \$475,020 for payment of the interest on the public debt, and \$202,095 in connection with the land commission act of 1870. Besides, the reconstruction legislature had repudiated an overissue of the conversion bonds amounting to \$5,965,000 as fraudulent and contrary to law.⁹

The manipulation of the State debt, according to this report, was accomplished through the collusion of the Financial Board comprising the governor, the state treasurer and the attorney-general, with their appointee, the financial agent of the State. These functionaries were regarded as responsible for the overissue of some State bonds and the illegal pledging of others as collateral security for loans, after the time legally designated therefor had expired. The incumbents of these offices during the period of the rapid expansion of the State debt were R. K. Scott, Niles G. Parker, D. H. Chamberlain, and H. H. Kimpton, respectively.

A comparison of the public debt during the reconstruction in connection with that of the pre-war and post-reconstruction periods exhibits astounding contrasts. The reports of the comptroller-general show a progressive increase of the public debt from October 31, 1869 until October 31, 1871. The debt then remained stationary until October 31, 1873. By the Act to reduce the volume of public debt and to consolidate the same, a reduction was made possible by October 31, 1874. The debt which continued to contract until 1878 was higher in 1880 than on November 1, 1878, as exhibited by the following statistics:¹⁰

⁹ *Reports and Resolutions, 1877-1878, Report of Commission to Investigate the Indebtedness of the State*, 859-948.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, *Report of Comptroller-General*, 1855-1860; 1868-1876; 1877-1885.

Year	Public Debt
September 30, 1855.....	\$2,287,156.23
September 30, 1856.....	2,693,276.60
September 30, 1857.....	3,058,681.60
September 30, 1858.....	3,192,742.96
September 30, 1859.....	3,691,574.10
October 1, 1860.....	4,046,540.16
July 7, 1868.....	5,407,215.23
October 31, 1868.....	5,407,306.27
October 31, 1869.....	6,667,793.68
October 31, 1870.....	7,665,908.98
October 31, 1871.....	15,851,327.35
October 31, 1872.....	15,851,327.35
October 31, 1873.....	15,851,627.35
October 31, 1874.....	9,540,751.28
October 31, 1875.....	7,674,704.75
October 31, 1876.....	7,109,250.44
March 31, 1877.....	7,100,841.98
October 31, 1878.....	6,537,695.84
October 31, 1879.....	7,121,677.22
October 31, 1880.....	7,281,629.45
October 31, 1881.....	7,253,447.74
October 31, 1883.....	7,122,318.34

These figures include neither the floating indebtedness nor the contingent liabilities of the State, the latter growing mainly out of the endorsement of railroad bonds. In 1877, the former was found to be \$1,046,926. The contingent liabilities fluctuated greatly. They were \$2,000,000 in 1857; but had risen to \$4,060,783.61 under the provisional government. Reduced to \$2,093,312.40 in 1869-1870, they were increased to \$8,787,608.20 the next year. They decreased to \$4,797,608 in 1872-1873 and remained at substantially that amount in 1877.

Although the public debt was ascertained by a special commission, the work of the joint committee encompassed the investigation of many important matters including the expenditures for supplies. The committee reported that the State was required to pay for every class of article desired by a legislator for his personal use. Thus a classification of the supplies so purchased comprised refreshments of various descriptions, groceries, furniture, furnishings, clothing, jewelry, crockery, glassware, carriages, horses and even printed matter of different kinds. Ac-

according to the report, furthermore, a rapid development of taste resulted at the expense of principle, as attested by the price of clocks paid on account of these legislators which advanced from \$5 in 1869 to \$600 in 1872.

The appropriation of public funds for the payment of these purchases was not an immediate development. Orders generally given through the clerk of the house in which a member served were charged to the said clerk who was authorized to deduct the amount thereof from the pay of the member. Soon, however, these accounts exceeding the member's pay were included in the report of the committee on contingent accounts and paid out of the public funds.

In addition to this, "pay certificates" were drawn and turned over to the chairman of the committee on contingent accounts of the Senate to collect and distribute. Thus there developed a system by which the committee reporting on claims approved the honest account of a creditor, but added after the last name on such an account the words "and others," which in general covered accounts for the payment of which public funds were illegally used.

This investigation brought out from the porter of the State House interesting testimony about the State House bar room wherein it is alleged wines, liquors, eatables, and cigars were served to State officials, senators, representatives, and their friends. The porter stated that this bar room was for six years kept open from eight o'clock in the morning until two or four the next morning, during which time it was in constant use seven days in the week. He knew of no similar place so well supplied with refreshment. Although the best cigars and wines were furnished, yet he could not estimate what amount of liquor was daily consumed. In this connection, however, according to Josephus Woodruff, the clerk of the Senate, the largest bills were rendered for such refreshments as liquors and cigars.

In addition to the refreshments furnished at the State House, which included those assigned to the "House Committee Rooms," large quantities of wines, liquors, cigars

and the like, according to testimony, were sent to hotels, boarding houses and residences of local and State officials. Such officials comprised members of both political parties; and their supplies, the vouchers showed, were purchased not only from such local and State merchants as Hardy Solomon, George Symmers, and Klinck, Wickenberg and Company of Charleston, but also from Kuhn and Company of Philadelphia.

For the purchase of furniture, the reconstruction government, it was testified, expended over \$200,000 in four years. Yet at the time of the investigation, certain furniture dealers valued the furniture in the State House at \$17,715. This included \$325 worth of furniture purchased by Attorney-General Melton and paid for by him from his contingent funds.

According to John Williams, Sergeant at Arms of the House, much of the furniture such as chairs, tables and bedroom sets was assigned to the rooms used by different legislators. Some went to committee rooms, while still other furniture went to places without the State House. This included the rooms over the South Carolina Bank occupied by certain legislators, and private rooms that they rented at lodging houses. Williams was never able to collect any of this furniture when a session closed, nor could he account for the disposition of it, but he knew that large purchases were made for these same quarters at the beginning of each session.

John B. Dennis, who also testified in this connection, purchased furniture for forty rooms including the offices of numerous State officials. A majority of the House members, Dennis testified, required payments of the creditors in return for voting for the many claims. In this way the bills were often doubled as were the "pay certificates" issued for them. Dennis asserted, furthermore, that C. P. Leslie had as land commissioner purchased furniture ostensibly for his office but in reality for his residence.

The expenditures for other supplies, according to the report, varied greatly. The accounts rendered for carpet-

ing amounted to several thousand annually. For stationery alone more than \$68,000 was charged during one session, yet each member, it was testified, received less than ten dollars worth. Prior to the introduction of specific appropriations, "pay certificates" for stationery, according to the report, were issued to such an extent that they brought not more than twenty cents on the dollar.

The expenditures for jewelry were also high, and the accounts for rents were regarded as exorbitant. A case in point was the certification by R. K. Scott of an account for room rent amounting to \$3,249.60. This, it was said, constituted the payment of one year's rental of a cottage used as a caucus room by Governor Scott during his candidacy for the United States Senate. The value of the cottage was estimated at less than the rental it brought for this one year.¹¹

Not even the frauds perpetrated in connection with the supplies, it was reported, rivalled the corruption that characterized the management of the public printing. The division of the spoils arising from this source, it was said, extended from the highest officials to the humblest member of the General Assembly. Besides the amounts expended for the benefit of such officials, according to the report, the fund obtained was devoted to the establishment and support of various political journals, such as the *Charleston Daily Republican*, the *Columbia Daily Union*, and the *Columbia Union-Herald*. A large amount of money, it was said, was expended annually for the support of these and other such journals without legal authority; and bills purporting to be presented under the authority of law, illegally and fraudulently increased in amount to many thousands of dollars, were paid annually from the State Treasury.

The moneys expended during the eight years of reconstruction for the publication of the general laws and claims for printing amounted to \$1,326,589, a sum in excess of the cost of public printing from the establishment of the State government up to 1868. The average annual cost of public

¹¹ *South Carolina Fraud Investigation, 1877-1878, 7-208.*

printing under the reconstruction government was \$165,823, whereas before reconstruction it was \$7,807, and under Hampton \$6,178 for his first year. The sum paid for printing during the single session of 1872-1873, amounting to \$450,000, exceeded that paid for the same purpose during the twenty-five years between 1840 and 1865 by the sum of \$171,759. Yet the volume of printing in consequence of the protracted sessions of the reconstruction General Assembly, was much greater than that of earlier legislatures.

The contract for public printing was at first awarded to J. W. Denny. Then the division of the spoils was confined to a few leading members of the General Assembly. In consequence of the dissatisfaction over this state of affairs, the Carolina Printing Company was organized by J. W. Denny, R. K. Scott, Niles G. Parker, D. H. Chamberlain, J. W. Morris, and L. Cass Carpenter. This company, it was stated, owned the *Columbia Daily Union* and the *Charleston Republican*.

In connection with the formation of this company, asserted Josephus Woodruff, Senator C. P. Leslie proposed that "pay certificates" for various amounts, ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000, for public printing be drawn, and one-fourth or more of the amount realized be distributed through the chairman of the committee on printing to certain designated senators. This system, it was alleged, continued as long as monies could be paid out of any sums in the Treasury "not otherwise appropriated." The system was checked only when the law providing specific appropriations and payments was enacted in 1874.

The organization of the Republican Printing Company, it appears, broadened the opportunity for fraudulent transactions. Referring to the appropriation of \$250,000 for that company, approved December 21, 1872, Woodruff testified that State officials, judges, lawyers, editors, reporters, and lobbyists manifested deep interest in the passage of the measure and were paid according to the supposed value of their service and influence. Among these he accredited to Governor Moses \$20,000, F. L. Cardoza \$12,500 and various

senators, including B. F. Whittemore, \$5,000 and less. These together with sums paid members of the House aggregated more than \$98,500 paid by the company at the expense of the government to secure votes for this bill.

In addition to this, for the passage of an appropriation of \$231,000 with interest during the next year, it was said, the company was forced to pay \$57,200 to certain senators and additional sums to House members and State officials, including \$10,500 to Governor Moses, aggregating altogether \$124,969 as bribes and commissions. This testimony of Woodruff was supported, in part, by that of A. O. Jones who was the clerk of the House and a member of the Republican Printing Company. Jones declared, to his certain knowledge, that there had been paid to members of the House and State officials for the passage of the printing appropriation of 1872, \$36,590; and in 1873, \$41,269.

The committee reported "that huge frauds were committed under the head of newspaper advertising, and that the people were loaded with an oppressive tax to subsidize a venal press." These frauds, according to the report, were equal in proportion to those of the Carolina or Republican Printing Company. Senators, it was asserted, received \$5,000 for publishing the Acts when a paper not so controlled was paid \$500. Representatives also obtained considerable amounts from the treasury for printing laws in country newspapers established for that purpose. There was expended in this connection, for the three administration dailies, the sum of \$156,708 during an average period of about two years. The few weeklies received in three years \$86,195.78 for publishing the Acts. Yet the five dailies edited by political opponents received but \$42,407.63 for advertisements of every description, including the publication of the Acts for four years; and the twenty-nine anti-administration weeklies received for similar services \$63,793.¹²

The legislative "pay certificate," an instrument purporting to evidence the performance of a service in connec-

¹² *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 214-383.

tion with the General Assembly, constituted, in the opinion of the committee of investigation, the fountain head of many of the frauds and forgeries "perpetrated by those in power during the Reconstruction." "Through this source," it was declared, "the most flagrant violations of law were committed whereby the State was annually robbed of amounts ranging from two hundred thousand to one million of dollars." This included the fraudulent printing certificates, which were collected and divided between those in power. In addition to this, the contingent fund was increased through the system of furnishing refreshments, for which "large numbers of certificates were issued ranging in amount from \$500 to \$5,000 each." Besides the "legislative ring," and the "printing ring," this instrument also "produced and nurtured" the "bond ring," thus constituting the "unfailing reservoir of funds necessary to perpetuate the power and influence of the political party then in control."

These certificates when approved by the presiding officer and clerk of the house for which a service was rendered constituted a valid claim against the State. The simplicity of this procedure doubtless served to encourage frauds as evidenced, according to the report, by the large number of certificates bearing the transposed initials or incorrect names of persons to whose order they were drawn. Notable instances cited by the report comprised certificates payable to J. M. Foreman for Governor F. J. Moses, T. Harlingford for T. Hurley, T. C. Andlow for Senator T. C. Andrews, C. J. Herrin for J. C. Hope, and B. Wharton for B. F. Whittemore. Sometimes a certificate bore a name which resembled in no way that of the person for whom it was intended, as evidenced by one drawn to John Gershon reported as for Governor Moses, who together with Senator John J. Patterson were declared the leaders in the enterprise of dealing in these "pay certificates."

According to the testimony of A. O. Jones, clerk of the House from 1868 to 1876, although it was his duty to attest the signature of the speaker, he never questioned the right

of that official to order his warrant on the state treasurer. "The issue of certificates," asserted Jones, "was enormous in number and amounts, and the pressure upon the presiding officers by members of the Senate and House to have certificates issued to their friends, political and otherwise, for sinecures and gratuities, increased at every session. The issue ran to the highest point at the session of 1871-1872, when the orders on the State Treasurer, drawn by the speaker of the House, amounted to over a half million of dollars, two-thirds of which were for sinecures and gratuities."

In further support of charges of fraud and corruption arising out of the issue of "pay certificates" the report exhibited the accounts of legislative expenses of four sessions of the reconstruction period in contrast with that of the session 1876-1877. The table indicates the total expenses of the several sessions as follows:

1870-1871	\$ 822,608.83
1871-1872	1,533,574.78
1872-1873	908,855.00
1873-1874	922,536.00
1876-1877	84,096.00

The obvious conclusion that the "pay certificates" issued in many instances constituted a direct fraud upon the State was further supported in the testimony of John Williams, the sergeant-at-arms of the House, to the effect that of one hundred and fifty certificates issued to persons styled as clerks of the House not one such person served. Likewise, despite the issuance of certificates in one session to two hundred thirty-five porters, but eight such were employed.¹³

The formation of a "railroad ring" comprising certain public officials led by John J. Patterson, declared the report, perpetrated a huge fraud on the State in connection with the acquisition of its interest in the Greenville and Columbia Railroad.¹⁴ The State owned large amounts of stock in certain railroads including the Greenville and Co-

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 389-521.

¹⁴ This list given includes Geo. W. Waterman, representing Gov. R. K. Scott, Niles G. Parker, Reuben Tomlinson, John L. Neagle, D. H. Chamberlain, C. P. Leslie, H. H. Kimpton, Joseph Crews, Timothy Hurley, and others.

lumbia which, acquired in consideration of public bounties conferred upon these corporations, were at the time unproductive.

The method taken to secure the controlling interest in this road, according to the report, was to have the stock owned by the State offered for sale. To this end legislation was enacted creating a Sinking Fund Commission authorized to sell the unproductive property belonging to the State. The ostensible purpose of this measure was said to be the disposal of damaged granite, marble, and similar material belonging to the State, but the real purpose was, according to this report, to sell at \$2.75 each the 21,698 shares of this railroad stock which cost the State \$20 a share.

The stock thus offered for sale was obtained by this group, which having bought shares from individuals now controlled the company. Then followed the passage of a measure authorizing the consolidation of the Greenville and Columbia and the Blue Ridge Railroads, the real purpose of which, the committee held, was the release of the railroad's property from the State lien securing its guaranty of the company's bonds to the amount of \$1,500,000 so as to enable the new controlling interests to place thereon a second mortgage for their own benefit. This measure, just as the first, it was asserted, was passed by bribing members with monies furnished by the State financial agent.

This functionary played a prominent part also in the purchase of a portion of this stock from individuals, the entire amount of which bought and held by the group was valued at \$240,000. That portion of the stock bought of private parties, costing approximately \$24,000 a share, was obtained from the proceeds of sales of State bonds by the financial agent, who, acting in collusion with the Financial Board of the State, effected the transaction at its direction. These shares, together with those acquired from the sale of State property, were distributed as agreed among the individual members of the group.¹⁵

¹⁵ *South Carolina Fraud Investigation, 1877-1878, 563-576.*

The committee reported that Patterson, assisted by H. G. Worthington, was given the opportunity to perpetrate another swindle of the State's monies when on December 18, 1871, C. C. Bowen introduced in the House a resolution to impeach Governor R. K. Scott of high crimes and misdemeanors. This was due to the investigations disclosing that the Financial Board, comprising Governor Scott, Treasurer Parker and Attorney-General Chamberlain, had fraudulently and illegally issued several millions of State bonds. These men, the committee said, encouraged the movement so as to impress upon Scott the impending danger to the end that the latter engaged their services to prevent by bribery the favorable consideration of the measure in the House.

The fund used by the Governor resulted from a joint resolution framed in 1869, authorizing the executive to employ an armed force for the preservation of peace, the expenses of which were to be paid from any funds in the treasury not otherwise appropriated. Warrants were drawn from this fund payable to John Mooney, \$25,545; to John Leggett, \$10,600; and to David H. Wilson, \$13,500. The monies based on these warrants were transferred to Patterson and Worthington who were expected to secure therewith the exoneration of Scott, and of Parker who was impeached with him.

Besides the sums above stated, the military fund was drawn upon for other monies in this connection. The adjournment for the Christmas holidays was approaching. As it might prove impolitic to permit the issue to await the new year, it was necessary to silence W. J. Whipper, who, supporting the impeachment had planned to occupy the floor until the adjournment. To defeat the efforts of Whipper they had to secure the services of Speaker F. J. Moses, Jr., who, for a friendly ruling to sustain Samuel J. Lee's question of privilege, was declared to have been paid from this fund a handsome sum. Likewise, R. B. Elliott, who sought to defeat the impeachment, was reported to have received for his support the sum of \$10,500 of the

military funds. The effective use of these monies, the committee believed, accomplished the desired purposes.¹⁶

Three measures comprising the Blue Ridge Railroad Scrip Act, the Validating Act, and the Financial Settlement Act, the report considered the crowning frauds perpetrated by John J. Patterson against the people of South Carolina. The first of these measures introduced in the House by A. L. Singleton represented a plausible scheme to relieve the State from its guaranty of the sum of \$4,000,000 of the bonds of the Blue Ridge company by the issue of scrip to pay the honest debt of the company. The real purpose of the Act, according to the report, was to perpetrate a personal fraud, as attested by the letter from Patterson to Niles G. Parker, the State Treasurer, instructing that functionary to deliver to Kimpton, the financial agent, \$114,250 of bond scrip, \$42,857 of which at par value was to be used to pay for the passage, through the House, of the validating bill and the bill authorizing the settlement of the accounts of the financial agent. Parker was, furthermore, instructed to deliver to Kimpton \$71,414 of the scrip at par, if the bills should become laws, with the provision that Kimpton should pay \$50,000, the proceeds of the scrip at 70 cents on the dollar, in paying the expenses already incurred in passing through the Senate the bill to relieve the State of all liability on the account of the guaranty of the Blue Ridge Railroad bonds.

The Validating Act which appeared merely to sanction the irregular issue of certain bonds, according to the report, was intended to make valid the illegal use and disposition of \$6,000,000 of State bonds by H. H. Kimpton, the financial agent, and then attach this debt to the State.

The third measure which required the financial board to make a settlement with the financial agent was, likewise, considered a scheme for concealing and cancelling the large sums expended by Kimpton from the sales of bonds illegally made to facilitate the fraudulent transactions en-

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 583-607.

gaged in by himself and those characterized as the "Bond Ring."

The passage of the three measures, the testimony disclosed, was accomplished by bribery and corruption. In this connection, it was asserted, Speaker F. J. Moses was paid \$25,000 in order to arrange the House committees as desired by Patterson and his associates. Later when the validity of the Blue Ridge Scrip was attacked, Patterson again sought to bribe F. J. Moses to obtain a favorable decision. Failing in this, when the act was repealed, it was testified, Patterson bribed H. J. Maxwell, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Engrossed Acts, to withhold or destroy the record, which accomplished, defeated the measure at the session. At a later period still, Patterson made a corrupt attempt to have the Blue Ridge Scrip included dollar for dollar when the measure funding the State debt at fifty cents on the dollar was on its passage through the Senate.¹⁷

The committee found other corruption in the election of a United States Senator in 1872, which developed into a spirited contest with John J. Patterson, Congressman R. B. Elliott and former Governor R. K. Scott as candidates. The triumph of Patterson over Elliott, his talented and formidable rival, it was reported, was procured through corruption and bribery. This was testified by Martin R. Delany, C. D. Hayne, R. M. Smith, W. B. Nash, George Bolivar, and numerous others who appeared before the committee of investigation. Patterson, it appears, maintained, over a saloon near the capitol, magnificent headquarters wherein various members of the legislature were sumptuously entertained in consideration of their votes and also paid such members varying prices for their support. To secure his election, it was said, Patterson spent between \$40,000 and \$50,000. It was said, moreover, that Patterson offered Elliott \$15,000 as a consideration for his withdrawal from the contest, but the latter indignantly rejected this overture. Yet, the victorious contestant was not alone

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 614-654.

in his efforts to win support through bribery, as the testimony shows that Robert K. Scott offered to each of several legislators the sum of \$100 for their votes.¹⁸

The approval of the claims of the South Carolina Bank and Trust Company amounting to \$125,000, according to the report, perpetrated a fraud against the State. This bank inaugurated in fraud, the committee said, and supported through the machinations of Chamberlain, Scott, Parker, and other officials, demanded through Hardy Solomon, its president, the sum of \$103,865.31, in satisfaction of claims, some of which were doubtful. Yet the claims were raised to \$125,000 at the suggestion of certain officials. The passage of the measure by bribery, it was said, cost Solomon \$80,000. According to the testimony of S. J. Lee, furthermore, Solomon, who had discovered a means of obtaining \$20,000 of this from another appropriation, desired that amount of the original appropriation to be disposed of through the issuance of "pay certificates." This was arranged, asserted Lee, so that the amount was divided between Lee and certain State officials including Governor F. J. Moses.¹⁹

Numerous minor frauds, it was reported, were perpetrated by the reconstructionists upon the people of the State. One of these arose in connection with the "armed force fund," resulting from a Joint Resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1869, authorizing Governor R. K. Scott to employ an armed force for the preservation of peace, and for this purpose to use any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated. As a result there was organized a State guard which was reported to have been used solely for political purposes. Vast expenditures were made in the support of this organization, as attested by the evidence purporting to indicate payroll expenses, allowances for travel, and the appropriation of funds for political purposes.²⁰

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 873-937.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 526-557. This bill was passed in 1873.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 702-738.

The State Militia, it was testified, was similarly used to preserve the unity of the political party then in power. The committee said it was mobilized to carry the election of 1870, at a cost greater than \$350,000. \$100,000 of this was expended in the enrollment alone, while \$250,000 was expended for the purchase and alteration of arms, the purchase of ammunition, and the distribution of this property to 100,000 militiamen. The actual expenditures made for these purchases aggregated \$180,750. Thus the difference between the total expenditures and actual cost was fraudulently appropriated. F. J. Moses, the Adjutant and Inspector-General of the Militia, it was believed, obtained much of this, in addition to a claim of \$10,000 as a royalty paid by the contractor who altered certain arms. This claim was discounted by H. H. Kimpton at \$7,000.²¹

The committee reported, too, that the phosphate bill of 1870, disapproved by Governor Scott, offered further opportunity for corruption. This measure, according to the testimony of F. J. Moses, Samuel J. Lee, and Prince Rivers, respectively, was passed over the veto through the corrupt use of money. Timothy Hurley, the lobbyist for the measure, according to the report, expended over \$20,000 in bribes to secure its passage, and of this money F. J. Moses received \$1,000 for his services as speaker, Samuel J. Lee \$250, and Prince R. Rivers about \$300.²²

A measure providing a transient sick and poor fund for the assistance of such persons in the various cities and towns of the State, it was said, was used for corrupt political purposes generally. This fund, according to the committee, was perverted to other purposes as attested by the evidence purporting to show that Hardy Solomon drew therefrom \$2,500 and Col. Rollin H. Kirk, a politician of that day, received transportation from Augusta to Washington, D. C.²³

The act creating the Sinking Fund Commission was re-

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 667-701.

²² *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 664-666.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 752-754.

ported a scheme whereby certain persons secured by pretended purchase, at nominal prices, the railroad stocks held and owned by the State. These frauds comprised the acquisition by the individuals of the State interest in the Greenville and Columbia Railroad, having a face value of \$542,450. Subsequent sales of other railroad stocks of the State by the Commission enabled these persons to acquire such interests having a face value of \$1,926,645. These transactions were followed by the enactment of a measure authorizing the Commission to purchase State bonds with funds accruing from the sales, the purpose being, according to this report, to increase the price of such bonds in order to facilitate the fraud contemplated. The bonds reported to have been purchased by H. H. Kimpton in consequence of this measure, according to this report, were never recovered by the State.

Still other frauds perpetrated by the Commission included the embezzlement of funds arising from the sale of valuable real estate; and the sale for an inadequate consideration, of certain marble, granite and other valuable properties of the State.²⁴

According to the committee another opportunity for fraud came on July 28, 1871, when Governor R. K. Scott issued a proclamation offering a reward of \$200 for each person arrested and convicted under the Enforcement Act. As a result, Governor Scott, upon the recommendation of Attorney-General Chamberlain, honored the application of a man named Hester, by issuing three warrants of \$3,000 each to be paid from the "armed force fund." Upon the further recommendation of D. H. Chamberlain, Governor Moses, during whose administration there was appropriated \$35,000 to pay the claims arising from the proclamation of his predecessor in office, appointed a commission to award these claims. This commission, of which Chamberlain was a member, awarded to six persons claims aggregating \$30,350. This money, it appears, was distributed among the payees and certain officials as Gov.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 849-867.

Moses, D. H. Chamberlain and T. J. Mackey. Despite the award of the \$35,000 authorized under the act nevertheless, the records of the court as reported by James E. Hagood, clerk of the United States Circuit Court for the District of South Carolina, showed that 109 persons were convicted under the Enforcement Act, thus entitling the distribution of \$21,800 in rewards.²⁵

More fraud followed from legislation approved on March 4, 1872, authorizing the State Treasurer to borrow money for legislative expenses. Under this act, Niles G. Parker, at that time State Treasurer, issued due bills in large numbers, it was testified, often without any money having been borrowed. In one transaction Hardy Solomon received from Parker such a due bill for \$95,100, yet the committee of investigation could find official vouchers for only two-thirds of that amount. This the committee regarded conclusive evidence of collusion between these two individuals.²⁶

The contingent fund of Governor F. J. Moses, according to his testimony, was in part fraudulently expended. He used the funds for such illegal purposes as to purchase for himself a one-half interest in a Columbia daily newspaper, and to cover the shortage of H. G. Worthington, collector of the Port of Charleston, who had appropriated for himself funds belonging to that office. Governor Moses employed the fund also to obtain from the legislature a large contingent fund, and with monies drawn therefrom bribed an investigating committee to render a favorable report of his disbursement of the fund.²⁷

Out of the suit of William Whaley *versus* the Bank of Charleston, wherein the former sought to collect certain monies in 1873, arose, it was reported, the attempt of D. H. Chamberlain to bribe Justice J. J. Wright of the Supreme Court of the State. In view of the disagreement between Chief Justice Moses and Justice Willard, the de-

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 653-663.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 749-751.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 739-748.

cision depended upon Justice Wright's concurrence with one of the two. Thus D. H. Chamberlain, counsel for the defense, sought through Governor F. J. Moses to secure the favorable decision of Justice Wright. This, Moses asserted, was arranged in consideration of two notes aggregating \$2,500, which he borrowed from Wright. Wright, however, denied such conduct and challenged the institution of legal proceedings to determine his guilt.²⁸

The committee reported, too, that the assets of the Bank of the State, then in the hands of a receiver, were used to furnish a loan to Governor F. J. Moses, in 1873. It appears that Hardy Solomon, unable to cash three warrants of \$5,000 each issued on the fund for the support of the penitentiary, returned the same to John B. Dennis, the superintendent of that institution, in exchange for negotiable warrants. The former warrants Dennis gave to Moses, who, knowing that they had been retired, nevertheless negotiated thereon through the advice and assistance of D. H. Chamberlain a loan of \$7,000. Chamberlain, it was reported, received \$1,000 of this sum.²⁹

The election of T. C. Dunn as comptroller of the State, according to S. J. Keith, was fraudulently accomplished. Keith, who was elected to the legislature in 1870, voted for the election of T. C. Dunn as comptroller-general and received therefor the sum of \$100. The money, according to Keith, was paid by R. B. Elliott, who also distributed similar sums to others who had likewise refused the offers of J. L. Neagle, an aspirant for the office. Dunn, Keith declared, was hostile to Cardoza who was at that time in disfavor with certain members of the Republican party.³⁰

The committee reported also that Thomas C. Dunn, who as comptroller-general received from the Southern Life Insurance Company a deposit of State bonds as required by the law of State, appropriated to his own use \$3,500 of these bonds which had been enjoined in Dunn's hands by

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 757-763.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 755-757.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 754.

Judge R. B. Carpenter. This discovery was made when the bond committee under the Hampton government while registering State bonds found that the said bonds reported as missing from the office of Comptroller-General Hagood had been registered by certain Charleston banks.³¹

Fraud and corruption, according to the report, prevailed in connection with the management of the State penal and charitable institutions. The construction of the State penitentiary, begun in 1866 under the Superintendency of Major T. B. Lee, was continued under C. J. Stolbrand and General J. B. Dennis respectively. With the appointment of Stolbrand by Governor Scott, according to this investigation, there began in 1869 a series of frauds, perversion of funds of the institution and embezzlements which, continued under Dennis, cost the State over \$900,000 less the small portion of expenses chargeable to Lee. Yet the work completed from 1869 to 1877 was not comparable in efficiency or extent with that accomplished under Lee. Instances of mismanagement and frauds cited include the hypothecation of \$30,000 of treasury warrants with Governor Scott for a loan of \$15,000; the purchase of machinery from Hardy Solomon for \$4,000, charged to the State at \$6,480; the contracts with W. B. Nash for brick and Henry E. Hayne for wood reported fraudulently executed; and also the purchase of supplies never received by the prisoners but charged to the institution.³²

The management of the State Orphan Asylum was likewise charged with the commission of numerous frauds. Located from 1869 to 1875 in Charleston, thereafter in Columbia, fraud in connection therewith, according to the report, commenced when Samuel L. Bennett succeeded Reuben Tomlinson as supervisor in 1870. From that time until 1873, the orphanage expended \$43,018 to support 100 inmates at an average annual cost of \$110. From 1873 until May 13, 1875, the management of the orphanage was vested in S. E. Gaillard, chairman of the board of trustees,

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 845-848.

³² *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 773-811.

and G. I. Cunningham, treasurer. During this administration, \$51,565 was required to support 100 inmates at an average annual cost of \$200. Of the total sum expended, vouchers could be found for \$8,381 only. In May 1875, W. B. Nash succeeded Cunningham as treasurer. His administration lasting until August 1, 1877, expended \$55,582.57 to support 64 inmates at an average annual cost of \$260. The fraudulent character of the expenditures under Nash was based mainly on the testimony of such merchants as Charles Bamberg, who claimed knowledge of the disposition of the supplies furnished the orphanage by them. Yet other merchants such as William Steiglitz, John E. Gyles, William Stowers and William Jones were uniformed as to misconduct at the Asylum, nor could they state the final disposition of supplies sold by them to the institution.³³

As a result of the report on the corruption thus exposed, the Hampton government brought indictments against numerous individuals named in schemes to defraud the State. These included Niles G. Parker, Y. J. P. Owens, S. L. Hoge, F. L. Cardoza, Thomas C. Dunn, Theodore Davidson, Richard H. Gleaves, Samuel J. Lee, Josephus Woodruff, A. O. Jones, C. W. Montgomery, F. J. Moses, Jr., John J. Patterson, F. S. Jacobs, R. K. Scott, Hiram H. Kimpton, L. Cass Carpenter, Robert Smalls, B. F. Whittemore and D. H. Chamberlain. These men were indicted for numerous offences such as bribery, forgery, breach of trust and conspiracy to defraud the State.³⁴

Nearly all of those indicted had departed the State. Three who remained were arrested and held to bail. One of these, F. L. Cardoza, was convicted of conspiracy to defraud the State in connection with a "pay certificate" of \$4,000, drawn to the order of C. L. Frankfort and paid by Cardoza. His appeal to the Supreme Court of the State was dismissed. Likewise Robert Smalls, the second of the three, was convicted of having accepted, while a senator,

³³ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, 812-836.

³⁴ *Reports and Resolutions, Report of Attorney-General, 1877-1878*, 321-327. Chamberlain was indicted later than the others.

a bribe of \$5,000 to influence his vote on the passage of a joint resolution to appropriate money to the Republican Printing Company. An appeal taken to the State Supreme Court was dismissed and the case was then taken on a writ of error to the United States Supreme Court. The writ of error was dismissed, however, on the motion of the attorney-general and with the consent of Smalls' counsel. The third defendant, L. Cass Carpenter, was convicted of forgery in connection with raising the amount of certain bills for public printing. All of these men were later pardoned by Governor Hampton.³⁵

Unsuccessful efforts were made to bring Patterson and Kimpton to the State; a civil suit was instituted against Corbin and Stone for the recovery of \$24,053.94 collected by them as attorneys for the State and not properly accounted for. Niles G. Parker was committed to await trial, and the attorney-general entered a *nolle prosequi* in the case of C. W. Montgomery who, in the opinion of that officer, had ignorantly rather than corruptly conspired to defraud the State.³⁶ The same action was later taken by Solicitor Bonham of Richland County in the case of D. H. Chamberlain, who upon being indicted had furnished bail in the sum of \$20,000.

Both the investigation and the trial of these men seemed decidedly political. Although much of the testimony taken by the committee of investigation was indisputable, questionable testimony reflecting upon the integrity of reconstruction leaders was admitted as competent evidence; and important conclusions were based upon the testimony of those who, steeped in the corruption of the period, were granted immunity because of their assistance in incriminating others. The appeals to prejudice so noticeable in every summary utterance condemning the preceding regime, furthermore, indicate clearly that the purpose of the investigation was to discredit the reconstruction government.

³⁵ *Reports and Resolutions, Report of Attorney-General, 1877-1878, 328; 1878, 448; 1879-1880, 840. Supreme Court of South Carolina Reports, Annotated Edition, Book 34, 195-261, 262-268.*

³⁶ *Reports and Resolutions, Report of Attorney-General, 1877-1878, 328.*

The investigation accomplished other purposes. Although the proceedings of the committee developed accusations against practically every prominent participant in the administration of the late government, less than twenty-five persons were indicted for their parts in defrauding the State. This position was justified by the attorney-general on the ground that the purposes of the State were served in the prosecution of the leaders in this mal-administration. Yet the three persons convicted were forthwith pardoned by Governor Hampton. Not a single individual was imprisoned therefore, as a result of the "monstrous corruption" uncovered by the "Restored Government."³⁷

Besides, Reynolds, who has especially sought to justify the overthrow of the reconstruction government of South Carolina, conceded the political character of the investigation. According to this writer, the committees of investigation "made it their business to probe to the bottom"—"aggressively undertook to justify the charges made at intervals for eight years that the government of South Carolina was steeped in rottenness and that its agents were with very few exceptions actual thieves and perjurers."³⁸

The committees of investigation also committed an error. While ascertaining the indebtedness of the State and the expenditures during the reconstruction and comparing the results with those under the pre-war and post-reconstruction governments, no mention was made of the fluctuating purchasing power of the dollar. From this it would be permissible to assume that the dollar was worth the same, in terms of purchasing power, from 1858 to 1880 inclusive. Yet such was not the case. In the late "fifties" the country was on the gold basis and paper currency was at par with gold. The financing of the Civil War caused an expansion of paper currency such that in 1863, \$100 in that currency was worth \$72.90 in gold. Five years later, \$100 in this currency was worth \$71.50 in gold. From this

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1877-1878.

³⁸ J. S. Reynolds, *Reconstruction in South Carolina, 1865-1877*, p. 463.

time until 1876, the value of the paper dollar so fluctuated that \$100 in paper was never worth more than \$89.40 in gold and for much of the time less than \$88 in gold. When the resumption of specie payment became a certainty, however, the paper dollar approached a parity with the gold. It began an upward trend in 1877 when \$100 in paper was worth \$92.70 in gold, in 1878 the ratio was \$100 to \$97.50 and on December 17, 1878, the paper dollar was quoted at par with the gold. Yet during this whole period the paper dollar was both the unit of value and the circulating medium.

From this inferior purchasing power of the reconstruction dollar it can be seen that another factor save fraud and corruption accounted, in part, for the higher expenditures of the reconstruction government as compared with those of other periods and exhibited by the following statistics:

Year	Treasury Disbursements ³⁹
1850	\$ 390,594.90
1851	395,913.45
1852	463,021.73
1853	482,974.67
1854	783,123.20
1855	514,883.29
1856	591,145.98
1857	608,294.85
1858	1,036,924.39
1859	908,698.02
1860	967,968.57
1868	807,969.92
1869	2,099,345.44
1870	1,830,840.82
1871	1,853,976.81
1872	1,634,835.61
1873	1,719,728.37
1874	1,605,736.31
1875	1,345,465.17
1876	1,365,906.00
1877	712,808.54

³⁹ *Reports and Resolutions, Report of Comptroller-General, 1850-1860; 1868-1889.* With reference to the expenditure of 1869-1870, over \$900,000 was declared to have been expended for floating indebtedness and expenses incurred prior to that year.

Year	Treasury Disbursements
1878	621,774.20
1879	749,784.01
1880	742,379.90
1881	790,653.32
1883	920,839.36
1885	834,877.22
1886	847,174.72
1887	987,974.83
1888	1,190,482.63
1889	1,176,673.78

As loathsome as the South Carolina frauds were, they found their counterparts in the national life. At the very moment when disreputable Northerners and Southerners were exploiting the Negroes of South Carolina to the discredit of that State, the *Crédit Mobilier*, comprising the controlling stockholders of the Union Pacific Railroad, had awarded to themselves a contract for constructing much of that road. Oakes Ames, a member of Congress, and also a prominent member of this inner company, bribed certain congressmen and prominent senators by distributing among them the extremely valuable *Crédit Mobilier* stock at a tremendously low price, in order to forestall any action of Congress against the enterprise of the Union Pacific which had already received most substantial assistance from the government. The discovery of this plot in 1872 resulted in the mere censure of Ames and James Brooks and besmirched the character of Schuyler Colfax and others.

The same Congress that investigated the *Crédit Mobilier* affair voted increased salaries to certain public officials and to the members of both houses of Congress. Yet public resentment against this measure caused the Congress convening in December, 1873, to repeal the law except as it affected the President and Supreme Court Justices. Another scandal of this period comprised the "whiskey ring" activities whereby the revenue officers of certain western communities as St. Louis had made a corrupt agreement with leading distillers to defraud the government of revenue duties. This affair, it was said, involved President Grant's

private secretary, who was nevertheless protected by the president. Likewise Grant's Secretary of War, W. W. Belknap, was impeached for malfeasance in office. It was said that he possessed corrupt knowledge of the payment to a friend, by the fur trader at Fort Sill, Indian Territory, of \$12,000 annually for the retention of that business. A portion of this money, it was stated, reached Belknap or his wife. Belknap avoided impeachment by resigning before the House could act.

These national scandals do not excuse fraud in South Carolina, but are evidences of the low state of political morality of that time. These together with the activities of the Tweed Ring in New York show conclusively that corruption was by no means peculiar to South Carolina. They show, furthermore, that corruption may thrive when legislators are generally intelligent if the leaders are corrupt. Thus the ignorance of some of the Negro legislators of South Carolina constituted but a minor cause of the corruption in that State, since the ringleaders in this nefarious business were clever, trained men who, if honest, might have guided the ignorant Negroes right. This is further attested by the fact that back counties of such mountainous States as West Virginia and Tennessee sent equally untrained, unlettered white men to their legislatures, yet no corruption of consequence was observed during this period in these States, whereas it was rampant in other States controlled by native whites. Until a few years ago, moreover, it was a matter of common report for rich men to secure their election to the United States Senate by buying up the venal members of legislatures of the most "advanced" States. The seventeenth amendment was to some extent designed to prevent such corruption.

CHAPTER XIV

THE AFTERMATH OF RECONSTRUCTION

The overthrow of the reconstruction government brought about a decided change in the political influence of the Negroes. The Hampton administration had secured a complete domination over all branches of the State government. This control was nowhere more striking than in the legislature. When that body convened in 1876, the Republicans constituted a majority in the Senate and contested the organization of the House with the Democrats. Upon the accession to power of the new government, however, the latter used the political investigations of 1877-1878 to secure the withdrawal from office of certain Republican legislators through the promise not to prosecute them for the misdeeds of which they were accused. Thus, through the consequent replacement of Republican legislators by Democrats, the former constituted a minority in both houses at the close of the legislative session of 1877-1878. There were thirty-five Republicans in the House and seven in the Senate at this time. Of this number four in the Senate and thirty-two in the House were Negroes. There were also three Negro Democrats in the House. Negro members of the General Assembly were, therefore, thirty-nine in all.¹

The problem of the "restored" government, therefore, was to retain control of the General Assembly, despite the conceded majority of qualified Republican voters in the State. One expedient to this end was the amendment of the election law at the legislative session of 1878. The law as amended required the voting precincts of each county to use two sets of tickets; one of these should designate the names of candidates for presidential electors and members of Congress, the other the names of State, circuit, and

¹ *News and Courier*, November 7, 1878.

county officers to be voted for. These tickets should be deposited in boxes properly labelled for each set of candidates. The law facilitated fraud in that managers of elections were given the opportunity to deceive ignorant and especially illiterate voters, by having them deposit their tickets in the wrong box.² In addition to this amendment, the legislature changed the voting precincts in the several counties to the disadvantage of Republican voters, it was claimed.³ According to a Republican party declaration of 1878, the law as changed virtually disfranchised voters in counties which had hitherto given large Republican majorities, since it required them to go sometimes twenty miles, even to cross rivers, in order to vote.⁴

With the Republicans thus circumscribed the campaign of 1878 was begun. The party nominated no candidates for State offices, although a considerable element led by W. J. McKinlay desired a "straight-out" Republican ticket. The dominant element of the party led by C. C. Bowen desired to concentrate upon electing a Republican legislature and county officers where a favorable vote might be expected. Nominations were also made for Congress, the sitting members except R. H. Cain being renominated.⁵ Meanwhile the Democratic State Convention had met, renominated all State officers, and adopted the party platform of 1876 essentially unchanged.⁶

The campaign of 1878 was conducted in much the same fashion as that of 1876. The Democrats attended Republican meetings and compelled the speakers to "divide time," and in various other ways intimidated Negroes so as to cause them to abstain from voting.⁷ These leaders were exhorted by the press to keep up a relentless warfare on the radicals, who sought to regain control of the State.

² *Acts*, 1877-1878, 632, 633.

³ *Ibid.*, 565-571.

⁴ *News and Courier*, Aug. 8, 1878. From the Republican Party Platform, 1878.

⁵ *Ibid.*, August 8 and 9, 1878.

⁶ *Ibid.*, August 2, 1878.

⁷ *Ibid.*, September-November, 1878.

Referring to the Republican Convention held in Columbia that year, the *News and Courier* said:⁸ "The sentiment of the Radical Convention in Columbia yesterday was more bitter than ever before. Mutterings and implications filled the air. No opportunity was lost of spitting in the face of the Democratic party. Policy and expediency were ignored. No candidates for the State officers were nominated, because it is believed that the effect of abstention will be to make the Democracy luke-warm, and enable the Radicals to sneak into power again through the portals of the House of Representatives." Deploring this possibility, the journal urged the support of the Democratic candidates upon the masses of colored people who were not regarded responsible for the misconduct of their leaders. These leaders, it was alleged, had insolently and defiantly thrown down the gauntlet and the Democrats were thereby compelled to accept the challenge and keep the government in safe hands.

The election resulted in a decisive victory for the party then dominant. Of a total of one hundred fifty members of the General Assembly the Democrats had a majority of one hundred forty-two on a joint-ballot. The Negro members of the General Assembly, numbering twelve in all, were equally divided between the Republicans and the Democrats. Three Negro Republicans sat in the State Senate and Beaufort County sent three Negro Republican members to the House. Negro Democrats were sent to the House from Charleston, Colleton, Orangeburg and Sumter counties. A Republican County ticket comprised of Negroes was elected in Beaufort County; but J. H. Rainey and Robert Smalls, Negro Republicans, were defeated for Congress.⁹

Despite this crushing defeat due mainly to fraud and intimidation, the Republican State organization continued to function. Candidates for the General Assembly, for county offices and for Congress were nominated in 1880.

⁸ *Ibid.*, August 8, 1878.

⁹ *Ibid.*, November 26, 1878.

The election of that year returned one hundred forty-two Democrats and six Republicans to the General Assembly. The latter included two Negro senators from Beaufort and Georgetown, respectively; and four members of the House from Beaufort and Georgetown. One Negro Democrat was elected to the House from Charleston.¹⁰ Besides, Robert Smalls was seated in Congress after a contested election with George D. Tillman who had been given the certificate of election.¹¹

Although the Negroes were a nonentity in a political sense, the movement initiated by the Greenback party in South Carolina alarmed the dominant group, lest a white minority might join with the Negro Republicans and overthrow the Democratic faction. As a measure to avert this contingency, the legislature passed a stringent registration and election law at the session of 1881-1882. By this law disfranchisement was accomplished in one of the several ways. The citizen was required to register under specified conditions, failure of which deprived him of suffrage. An elector was required to vote at the precinct designated by his certificate, failure of which prevented him from voting. No elector removing from one residence, precinct, parish, ward or county was permitted to register or vote without a transfer of registration.¹² The law also provided separate ballots for the governor and lieutenant-governor, other State officers, circuit collectors, State senator, members of the House, county officers, representatives in Congress, and presidential electors. These ballots were to be cast in separate boxes. This was the eight box device which confused the less intelligent voters. According to the Republican State Convention of 1882, this law contemplated the disfranchisement of the four-fifths of the Republicans in the State.¹³

The full effects of this law were not felt in the election of

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, November 17, 1880.

¹¹ *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1002.

¹² *Acts*, 1881-1882, 1110-1115.

¹³ *News and Courier*, September 13, 1882.

1882. In this year the Republicans, as was their custom since 1876, nominated no State ticket, although an element of the party cooperated politically with the Greenback faction which did nominate candidates for State offices. Despite the success of the Democratic ticket the Republicans, as a result of the fusion with the Greenbacks, elected twelve Negroes to the General Assembly. Three of these were senators from Beaufort, Berkeley and Georgetown counties, respectively. Nine Negro Republicans were elected to the House, as were also three Negro Democrats. Furthermore, county officers elected in Beaufort County were Negro Republicans, and some of the same designation were elected in Berkeley and Georgetown.¹⁴ Robert Smalls also served out the term of E. W. M. Mackey, a white Republican who had been elected to Congress that year.

The new registration law was a factor in the further decline of the Negro's political prestige in 1884. That year, the Republicans nominated a State ticket headed by David T. Corbin, in opposition to the Democratic ticket led by Governor Hugh S. Thompson. The Democrats won the election by a decisive vote. They also reduced the Republican members of the General Assembly. The latter consisting of six Negroes included senators from Beaufort and Georgetown counties, and members of the House from Beaufort and Orangeburg. One Negro Democrat was returned from Charleston. County officers were elected in Beaufort as usual. These included W. J. Whipper, a prominent reconstruction leader, who was elected as Judge of the Probate Court.¹⁵

The election of 1886 returned eight Negroes¹⁶ to the General Assembly. Six of these were Republicans, two of whom sat in the Senate and four in the House. The two Negro Democrats were members of the House. Concerning these members the press commented in a praiseworthy

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, November 11, 1882.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, November 26, 1884.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1886.

vein. Referring to J. T. Reynolds, who had been reelected to the Senate, the *News and Courier* stated that he was a well-educated, college trained man, fitted for the duties of legislation. Formerly a school teacher in Beaufort County, he then practiced law in connection with W. J. Whipper, under whom he had studied that profession. Reynolds, who was born a slave, differed in this from Thomas E. Miller who had always been a free person of color. Miller who had formerly served in the Senate, but at that time sat in the House, was educated at Lincoln University. He was a lawyer by profession and was recognized as a ready and vehement speaker. John C. Rice, also of Beaufort, had served in the legislature in 1880. He was formerly a school teacher. He had engaged in farming since 1885. Rice was of a quiet demeanor. The Beaufort delegation of 1886 was completed by J. J. Washington, a young man who had studied at the State University prior to 1877. He had been a federal appointee in the State in 1880, but was removed in 1882. After that he taught school.¹⁷

Other Negro Republican members of the legislature at this session were Senator B. H. Williams of Georgetown and J. A. Baxter of the same county. Senator Williams was a minister of the A. M. E. connection. According to the press, he was a man of intelligence and fine appearance. He had won the confidence of his followers who elected him to the State Senate in 1876. Williams had been returned as senator from Georgetown twice since that time. Always a conservative in politics, his dignified and self-respecting demeanor during his service in the State Senate had won for Williams the respect of all the Democratic members of that body. Unlike Senator Williams, however, J. A. Baxter had been trained as a shoemaker. Later, educated in a free school in Georgetown, Baxter was made a commissioner of elections for that county in 1878. He discharged the duties of that office fearlessly and independently. Following his service as a teacher in the public

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1886.

schools, Baxter was elected to the House in 1884. In 1886, he was reelected on a compromise ticket.¹⁸

The two Negro Democratic members of this legislature were Marshall Jones of Orangeburg and George M. Mears of Charleston. Jones was well and favorably known in Orangeburg County and was regarded as exceeding the average of his race in intelligence and general information. In 1882, he was elected one of the county commissioners on the regular Democratic ticket and discharged the duties of his office with fidelity and entire satisfaction to all classes. He had never depended upon politics for a living, but was a thrifty farmer. By industry and economy he had accumulated considerable property, including much valuable real estate and was, therefore, independent. Jones was respectful and polite in his intercourse with all classes and enjoyed the esteem and confidence of both races in his county.¹⁹

George M. Mears, a native Charlestonian, was born of free parents in 1850. He received a common school education and was trained to become a ship carpenter, at which trade he later worked. He embraced the principles of Democracy at an early date and represented the colored Democrats of Charleston in the legislature after 1880.²⁰

Five Negroes were returned to the House by the election of 1888. Three Republicans were sent from Beaufort and Georgetown counties, while the Negro Democrats were elected in Charleston and Orangeburg counties.²¹ Furthermore, Thomas E. Miller was elected to Congress, and seated after a contest with Colonel William Elliott, to whom the certificate of election had been given.²²

The election of 1890 returned six Negroes to the House. These, all of whom came from Beaufort, Berkeley and Georgetown counties, were Republicans elected on a fu-

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1886.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1886.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1886.

²¹ *Ibid.*, November 25, 1888.

²² *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 864.

sion ticket. All of these were, in the opinion of the press, substantial representative citizens, really capable of performing their duties as legislators. Referring to James Wigg of Beaufort, the *News and Courier*²³ described him as being a well-to-do farmer of St. Helena township. He represented the conservative element of his race and was well thought of by his white neighbors. Like Wigg, Thomas R. Fields, also of Beaufort, was a farmer. He lived in Sheldon township and bore an excellent reputation as a conservative citizen.

Negro representatives from Berkeley County were Andrew Singleton, Mark P. Richardson and Thomas H. Wallace. They were regarded as industrious, conservative, prosperous farmers. Singleton and Richardson, moreover, had represented Berkeley County in the lower House for more than ten years. The Negro representative from Georgetown County was regarded somewhat in the same light as his colleagues from Berkeley. He was Robert B. Anderson, a man of fair education. Anderson had been a school teacher and a town warden prior to his election to the legislature. He had never taken an "official" part in politics.²⁴

These few representative Negroes, however, did not materially affect the political status of the Negro. Things continued the same until there came in 1890 the upheaval resulting from a movement designated as the National Farmers' Alliance. This movement which had developed during the previous decade commenced ostensibly as a joint agricultural and commercial enterprise, proposing to make the farmer more potent in his dealings with the merchants and cotton buyers. Its primary purpose was to enable the farmer to dispose of his products at a fair price. To this end general stores and warehouses were maintained and other cooperative efforts were developed for the benefit of the members of the order.

Social intercourse between farmers of different com-

²³ *Ibid.*, November 25, 1890.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, November 25, 1890.

munities was facilitated, also, through the holding of barbecues and picnics. On these occasions local leaders in the organization discussed the political issues of the day and intimated that those governing the State, having had little contact with the common people, did not know the true needs of that class of citizens. This doctrine was further enunciated at the weekly and monthly meetings of the local alliances, to the end that these organizations eventually became essentially political. Thus the farmers became active politically, and from 1884 onward began to occupy an uncommonly large number of the county offices. These office holders established local political machines which sent their most talented men to the legislature. In the meantime, poor whites of unusual power such as B. R. Tillman and Irby forged to the front in the political activities of the movement by cleverly fomenting strife between the city folk and the country people, the aristocrats and the poor whites. By means of the political machinery of the alliances and the direct party primary system inaugurated in 1886, these leaders overthrew that element of the Democratic party, represented by Wade Hampton, M. C. Butler, and A. C. Haskell, and captured the Democratic convention of 1890. This resulted in the nomination of a ticket of poor whites, headed by Benjamin R. Tillman.

The Tillman faction which had thus captured the Democratic party was opposed in the campaign by another Democratic faction styled the "True Democrats," headed by Judge Haskell. The latter, finding itself a minority element, sought the support of the Negroes. This brought against Judge Haskell and his followers the wrath of the press and opposition of prominent leaders who were soon to lose control in the party councils. Hampton, Butler, Hagood, and others, then, pledged themselves to support the nominees of the Democratic party. The *News and Courier* also urged the people to support the Tillman ticket. Referring to the approaching election that journal said: "We did not approve and do not now approve the methods by which this ticket was nominated, but it was nominated

by an overwhelming majority of the party after a full canvass of the State, and there is no appeal from the decision." Continuing, the journal declared the election to be a contest not between Tillman and Haskell, but between the Democratic and Republican parties; between the white people and the Negroes; between "True Democracy and Independentism" in its most dangerous form. It was thus the imperative duty of every Democratic voter to support the Tillman ticket.²⁵

The successful issue of Tillman's fight for power was not to the interest of the Negroes. The newly dominant element of the Democratic party was not only less enlightened and less liberal than the Hampton-Butler element, but it hoped to obviate the remote possibilities of such a fusion of the white minority and the Negro Republicans as to bring success to such a ticket in a subsequent election. Plans to reach this end were soon worked out by these new leaders.

While steps in this direction were being taken, moreover, the two State elections which were held showed a further decline of the political power of the Negro. The election of 1892 returned three Negroes to the House; and George W. Murray, a Negro Republican, was elected to Congress.²⁶ Two years later there were elected to the House Thomas E. Miller of Beaufort and R. B. Anderson of Georgetown. George W. Murray, elected to Congress at the same time, was seated after a contest with Col. William Elliott who had been given the certificate of election.²⁷ Concurrently with the continued downward trend of the Negro's political power came a striking change in the personnel of the General Assembly after 1890. The election of 1892 sent an unprecedented number of new members to the House of Representatives. That body, according to the press, gave every evidence of being "distinctly a Farmers' Movement

²⁵ *Ibid.*, November 4, 1890.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1892.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, November 27, 1894; *House Journal*, 1894, 3-8, *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 884-885.

Legislature.” Similarly the Senate consisted of twenty-nine partisans of Benjamin R. Tillman and seven conservatives. The poor white element, then, completely dominated the legislature. Thus it was to be expected that the growing hold of the new leaders on the population, as reflected in these returns, should encourage those leaders to undertake to change the fundamental law with respect to suffrage.

With this purpose in view, then, the question as to whether a constitutional convention should be called was submitted to the voters in the general election of 1894. The electors decided in favor of a convention by a majority of 1,879 votes of 60,925 cast on the question. This resulted in much dissatisfaction among the white people of the State, many of whom held that both the majority in favor of the convention and the election of State officers had been fraudulently obtained. Referring to the need of election reform, the *Greenville Mountaineer*²⁸ said: “The charges of fraud will not be sustained in many instances, but there is no doubt that gross irregularities have occurred in the recent election, as indeed they are always occurring where the laws are not stringent and carefully guarded. It is doubtful whether a strictly legal election has been held in South Carolina since the war, if mere irregularities are to count against it, and since the passage of the registration law, it has been easy enough to find fault with the registration of voters or the manner of holding elections. So long as these irregularities did not affect white men, there was no indifference in the public mind as to the result, but with the recent divisions and dissensions a different feeling has arisen in regard to the matter. The legislature should provide at once for ballot reform in South Carolina. We have reached that point when it is necessary that a strict and uniform law shall be enacted, which will guarantee fairness and justice, and for the violation of which an adequate punishment shall be meted out. It is entirely feasible to frame a law which will guarantee to the voter that his

²⁸ Reproduced in the *News and Courier*, November 21, 1894.

ballot shall be counted just as it was when cast, and to take away from partisan or factional managers the opportunity of annulling the wish of the voter. The gravity of the situation today in South Carolina is made more serious by the conviction in the minds of many that the election returns do not represent the popular will.”

The fraudulent character of the election of 1894 not only engendered disgust in many white men over the domination of Tillman, but brought prominently before the public view the unhappy plight of the Negro. He was prevented by illegal means from the free exercise of suffrage. The Civil Rights cases as decided by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1883 had made him defenceless against personal discrimination. He was subjected to lynch law throughout the State. He was often defrauded out of the pay for his work and against this he had no redress either in the courts of the trial justices or in the higher judicial tribunals of the State.²⁹

To protest against this injustice, the Negroes had as official spokesmen frequently a Congressman, a generally decreasing number of legislators, and a few federal appointees in the State; but these could not accomplish anything in the behalf of their race, despite the political prestige many of them had formerly enjoyed. Men of this type included C. M. Wilder who was postmaster at Columbia for eight years after the reconstruction; former Congressman Robert Smalls who was appointed collector of the port of Beaufort; R. B. Elliott, J. H. Rainey, D. A. Straker, and W. W. Beckett, who were employed as United States Treasury officials in the revenue or custom service in South Carolina.³⁰

The voice of these men, however, availed little before the increasing opposition. The Constitutional Convention authorized by the election of 1894 assembled on September

²⁹ *Congressional Record*, January 12, 1891; from the Speech of Congressman T. E. Miller, on the *Force Bill*.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1878-1895; *Journal of Negro History*, V, Some Negro Members of Reconstruction Conventions and Legislatures and of Congress, compiled by statisticians.

10, 1895. Dominated by Benjamin R. Tillman, the body sought to devise some means whereby to disfranchise the Negro without, at the same time, qualifying the suffrage of any portion of the whites, or violating the letter of the Fifteenth Amendment. Such a purpose ran counter to the desire of the six Negro members of the convention sent from Beaufort and Georgetown counties. They were James Wigg, T. E. Miller, I. R. Reed, W. J. Whipper, and Robert Smalls, all of Beaufort, and R. B. Anderson of Georgetown. These gentlemen did not hope to prevent the disfranchisement of a considerable number of their group, but they did propose that such an action should not discriminate against the Negro.

The important suffrage article of the constitution then being framed was presented for the consideration of the convention on October 25, 1895.³¹ The qualifications for suffrage thereby imposed required residence of two years in the State, one in the county, four months in the election district in which the elector offered to vote, and the payment of a poll tax six months before any election. Registration, which should provide for the enrollment of every elector once in ten years, was required. Any person applying for registration was required to be able to read and write any section of the constitution or to show that he owned and paid taxes on three hundred dollars worth of property in the State. Yet, until January 1, 1898, all male persons of voting age, able to read a clause of the constitution, or understand it when read to them by the registration officers, were entitled to register and become electors. After January 1, 1898, any one who should apply for registration, if otherwise qualified, was entitled to be registered, provided that he was able to read or write any section of the constitution or had paid taxes during the year on property in the State assessed at \$300 or more.³²

Speaking in opposition to the proposed suffrage provision, Thomas E. Miller sought to secure the rejection of

³¹ *Constitutional Conventional Journal, South Carolina*, 1895, 410.

³² *Ibid.*, 297-298.

the report. He held that the plan, if adopted, would secure the disfranchisement of the common people both black and white. Although the manipulation of the elections might enable the poor whites to vote for a while, the accession to power of a governor committed to the interests of the wealthy, he asserted, would surely bring about the disfranchisement of the poor whites. The working people the country over would resent this attack on the rights of the common people, and the suffrage provision would be condemned as violating the Fifteenth Amendment.³³

Robert Smalls likewise opposed the proposed plan. He asserted that the Negro voters who paid taxes on property valued at \$12,500,000 in 1870 deserved better treatment than the convention proposed to give them. He contended that suffrage based on intelligence would give the whites a majority of 14,000 votes at that time. Thus, the drastic measure contemplated was both unnecessary and cruel. Attacking the "understanding clause," Smalls asserted that even if administered fairly great injustice would be done since no man of average intelligence could be expected to explain to the satisfaction of an election official questions over which the learned justices of the Supreme Court frequently disagree. He understood, however, that the convention's plan was to have the law so administered that a white man would understand any given clause of the constitution while a colored man would not. R. B. Anderson concurred with this view.³⁴

Referring to the same question, W. J. Whipper admonished the delegates to use their great powers with moderation and good sense so as not to perpetrate a wrong on an unoffending people. He admitted that the Negroes were unfitted for suffrage in 1868, but contended that the whites who had just lost a war to perpetuate slavery were as unfit, on that account, to do justice to the Negroes as were the latter to cast the ballot. Reconstruction, in his opinion, was a failure mainly because the white men of the

³³ *News and Courier*, October 27, 1895.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, October 27 and 29, 1895.

South would not cooperate in a political way with the Negroes. The latter were thus forced to affiliate in their new duties with white men from the North. The corruption of reconstruction was the fault of white men who had made the Negroes their dupes. Furthermore, the Negroes had never sought supremacy even during reconstruction. Negro rule was never a fact. Even in Beaufort, where the ratio of Negroes to whites was as eleven to one, some white county officers were elected. There was no justification at that time, therefore, in the fear of Negro supremacy. Hence, the proposed suffrage clause could be justified neither on the grounds of logic nor of expediency.³⁵

The proposed suffrage plan, according to Isaiah Reed, was not warranted by the facts. He asserted that the Negroes had voted to elect Wade Hampton, Johnson Hagood, J. C. Sheppard, and even B. R. Tillman to the office of governor. Many had lately voted for John Gary Evans, the executive at that time. Besides, delegates elected to that body owed their presence in part to the votes of Negroes. These circumstances, in the opinion of Reed, exploded the idea that the Negroes challenged white supremacy. They were willing to permit intelligence to rule. Referring to the manner in which justice was administered to the Negroes in the State, Reed said they usually received "a great deal of trial and very little justice." If the proposed suffrage clause should prevail, Reed held, the Negro would be denied all those rights which make citizenship desirable.³⁶

Speaking in support of his counter suffrage proposal, James Wigg advocated as qualifications for suffrage a residence of two years in the State and of one in the county in which one offers to vote. The prospective elector must also be able to read any section in the constitution or be a free holder, or have returned for taxation personal property in his own name valued at one hundred dollars or more. He must also register according to law in order to

³⁵ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1895.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, October 29, 1895.

be entitled to vote. This plan Wigg advocated to secure the supremacy of the law of intelligence and property; while the committee plan, in his opinion, offered white supremacy with white degradation.

In extending his remarks Wigg contended that "the doctrine so persistently taught that the interests of the Negro and Anglo-Saxon are so opposed as to be irreconcilable is a political subterfuge; a fallacy so glaring in its inception, so insulting to Providence, so contrary to reason and the logic of history that one can scarcely refrain from calling into question either the sanity or honesty of its advocates." Continuing, he asserted, the two races are destined to live together in South Carolina. The Negro has a right to demand that, in accordance with his wealth, his intelligence, and his services to the State, he be accorded an equal and exact share in its government. This was his just due; he asked no more, he would accept no less. Conceding the right of the State to make any qualifications on suffrage which should operate justly and equally upon all who might wish subsequently to enter into citizenship, Wigg emphatically denied the right of the State to abridge the rights of a citizen then a voter.³⁷

Regarding the contention of the Negro members for recognition as citizens without regard to color or race, the *News and Courier* asserted that the arguments and appeals of the colored delegates were forcible and eloquent in different degrees. That they were without effect was due to the fact that they were directed against the most radical sentiments and prejudices of those to whom they were addressed.^{37a}

In response to the demands of the Negro delegates, Benjamin R. Tillman, the Chairman of the Committee on Suffrage, spoke at length. Admitting the great importance of the wise regulation of the suffrage, the question which caused the convention to assemble, Senator Tillman contended that the frauds and corruption perpetrated during

³⁷ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1895.

^{37a} *Ibid.*, Oct. 29, 1895.

the reconstruction constituted the principal reason for the restriction of the suffrage so as to make Negro supremacy in South Carolina forever impossible. After reviewing in some detail the report of the frauds investigating committee of 1877-1878, he made reference to the conviction of Smalls on a charge of bribery, and the testimony relating to defalcations charged to W. J. Whipper. Tillman asserted that although the Negroes were not the agents of this corruption, they were nevertheless responsible for its perpetration, since their votes placed in office the dishonest white men who defrauded the State. He proposed, therefore, to restrict the suffrage, without coming in conflict with the Constitution of the United States, so as to make impossible a recurrence of such misrule.

The white people, Tillman claimed, were disgusted over the methods theretofore used to carry elections since their restoration to power. By fraud and violence, he conceded, the whites overthrew the reconstruction rule. By resort to the same methods the elections of 1878 and 1880 were carried. Then came the registration law and the "eight box law." But these were not sufficient so long as they ran counter to the fundamental law of the State. The alteration of the fundamental law with respect to the suffrage was imperatively needed at that time because of the disunity among the white people in the State. For this reason, an intelligence restriction would not be sufficient, since a white voting population of 40,000 reformers and of 40,000 conservatives, unaided by 15,000 illiterate whites disfranchised because of this circumstance, would offer the Negroes the opportunity to control the State. This thing Tillman was determined to avoid. He, therefore, recommended the acceptance of the suffrage plan as proposed by the committee. This plan was adopted with modifications by the decisive vote of seventy-seven to forty-one.³⁸

The new suffrage requirements accomplished the purposes of those who made them. The "understanding

³⁸ *Constitutional Convention Journal*, 1895, 443-472, 517.

clause'' of the new constitution permitted illiterate whites to continue undisturbed in the exercise of the suffrage. By the same token, in connection with other hostile provisions, the Negroes, as a group, were disfranchised. No Negroes were thereafter elected to Congress, although R. B. Anderson, of Georgetown, was sent to the State legislature in 1896. This date, however, marked the complete passing of the Negro as a political factor in South Carolina. The government of that State thus became a minority white man's government, operated by him for his own benefit.

SUMMARY

With one exception the Negro population of South Carolina in 1865 did not differ widely from that of any other reconstructed State. The exception was the very degraded class of Negroes on the Sea Islands, rivaled only by the 150,000 poor whites of the upper counties in ignorance and excelled by them in crime. Turned loose upon the world without any economic equipment, some Negroes made matters worse by wandering from place to place to enjoy their freedom. This did not continue many months, for they were soon forced by circumstances to work.

Immediately after the war the native white planter class, acting upon the proclamation of the president, reorganized the State government along lines differing little from what it was before the Civil War, except that the Negroes were granted nominal freedom. As the rights and privileges of Negroes were so generally restricted by special laws known as the slave code, and they could be so easily imposed upon in making contracts to labor, they soon saw themselves all but facing reenslavement. The cruel treatment received from some of the master class and murderous attacks from irresponsible persons in South Carolina, as elsewhere in the South, all tended to strengthen the conviction that the South would reenslave the Negroes. Congress, therefore, ignored the President's efforts in the rehabilitating the Southern States and carried out the plan of Congressional reconstruction.

While this was going on, the economic situation tended to clear up. The Negroes willingly worked wherever they could obtain fair wages. As the soil had been impoverished by overwork in the production of provisions during the war, and the planters had but little capital with which to rebuild the waste places of the land, however, under-production of cotton followed. This was aggravated, too, by the loss of labor through the Negro children drawn into the schools

and the decrease in the female laborers, since the Negro women did not generally work in the fields after emancipation. A few Negroes, moreover, migrated to other States. A further decrease in the labor supply resulted from the increasing number of Negroes who obtained small parcels of land and farmed independently, producing provisions rather than cotton.

In their new position as free laborers or independent farmers protected by the Federal Government the Negroes clamored for the use of public facilities, but did not socially disturb the whites, as had been predicted. The upheaval of the Civil War gave some stimulus to race admixture, but not enough to change the aspect of the social order. Where there was some intermarriage of the races, the records show that the whites were seeking the Negroes as eagerly as the latter were seeking them. The writer found in the newspapers of the native whites as many cases of marriages between white men and Negro women as there were between white women and Negro men.

The participation of the Negro in politics did not diminish his efficiency as a laborer, as has been erroneously stated by biased writers. On the contrary, statistics and the reports made to the press from year to year by the native whites themselves prove that the efficiency of Negro labor progressively increased throughout the reconstruction. After 1868 there was no serious disturbance of Negro labor until the whites injected politics into the question in 1876.

The State of South Carolina, moreover, was not so hard pressed as its rather complaining native whites generally tried to make the public believe. Many of the complaints as to hard times were made for the purpose of discrediting the work of the reconstructionists. It is true that the planters and business men had less and some few had practically nothing in comparison with their opulence prior to the Civil War; but many as were the difficulties, they were not sufficient to conquer ordinary enterprise. Whites lacking initiative descended to a lower level, but men of

courage overcame their handicaps and speedily retrieved most of their losses. Statistics show that from the economic point of view, South Carolina was steadily progressive throughout the reconstruction period.

The mistakes of the reconstruction were due in a measure to the native whites of the higher class. Approaching the task of reconstruction, the Negroes, acting upon the advice of their white friends in the North, invited the better class of Southerners to assume the leadership in politics; but being too haughty to associate politically with their ex-slaves, and hoping to defeat the reconstructionists immediately, the aristocratic group lost this opportunity to the Northern adventurers who organized the Negroes against them. The Convention of 1868, then, represented a majority of the people of the State, but did not represent the former master class. The constitution framed and ratified by the will of the majority participating in the government was a creditable instrument, which with little amendment satisfied the State for a generation; and when changed it was for racial superiority readjustment rather than on account of public welfare.

While the rôle played by the Negro during this drama has been adversely criticized as the work of an ignorant mass, it must be conceded that the Negro was somewhat prepared for this new function by the early opportunities for improvement offered through the school and church. Most of the leaders of the Negroes in politics were men of fair education and some were exceptionally well trained, as attested by the native whites themselves in various ways. All Negro leaders, moreover, did not participate in politics for the reason that they had so much to do in the reconstruction of the race along religious and educational lines.

Many Negroes who did take a part in the government showed adequate knowledge of politics and labored for the progress of the State, as attested by the native whites themselves, although there were elected to the legislature some few who had no equipment for the services which they were called on to perform. Such undeveloped persons, how-

ever, were never in numbers sufficient to dictate the policy of the administration, for such determining force came largely from the native whites and Northern adventurers in control of the administration. At no time in the history of South Carolina or any other State did the Negroes control the government altogether. The misfortune was that the whole State government fell into the hands of a corrupt group consisting of Northern adventurers and native whites supported by a sufficient number of Negro members of the legislature to rob the State and to cover up their crimes. These same Negroes would have just as willingly followed the leadership of sympathetic persons working for clean government. They were later invited thus to cooperate with the planter class, but the appeal from persons who had tried to reenslave them did not have very much effect, especially when the Negro officeholders were being ridiculed and racial antagonism was being fostered by others of the same class.

The actual frauds, however, and their cost to the State were grossly exaggerated for political purposes. This is especially true of the part the Negro played in these frauds and the extent to which they personally profited thereby. Investigation shows that some few Negroes did receive small sums of money to vote for huge measures by which the whites engineering the scheme obtained millions. The Negroes enjoyed the gorgeous furniture of the State House, quaffed wine at the expense of the commonwealth in the State House barroom, but these were but douceurs thrown out to obtain their support for the real frauds. A contemporary summarized it in saying that "in the distribution of spoils the poor African gets the gilt and plush, the porcelain spittoons, the barbaric upholstery, while the astuter Caucasian clings to the solider and more durable advantages."¹ What was going on in South Carolina at this time, moreover, was being duplicated in a measure at the same time in several States and in the national administration, most of which fortunately or unfortunately have

¹ *Nation*, XIV, 197.

never been investigated by a revolutionary body, as was the case at the close of the reconstruction period in South Carolina.

Corrupt as the government became, however, it tended to purify itself. Under Chamberlain the backbone of the ring was broken, according to the testimony of the native whites. He actually reformed the State throughout, carrying the drastic changes so far that he all but alienated his own party, but at the same time almost won the support of the planter class. Had it not been for the more partisan like faction led by M. C. Butler and M. W. Gary, who kept the people excited over the possibility of the recrudescence of corruption and the menace in the election of undesirable Negroes to office, the reconstructionists would not have been suddenly overthrown. The opposition ceased to be a reform party, for that issue had already been met by the satisfactory administration of Chamberlain. The opposition thereafter became a racial-superiority-asserting group determined to eliminate the Negro from politics.

The result was a revolution worked out in the midst of intimidation and fraud. Both parties resorted to unfair methods; but the Hampton supporters with a more effective organization out-defrauded the defrauding and secured the favorable decision from a national administration which, according to historians, had come into office in the same way. Hampton himself was presented as the clean man who guaranteed justice and equality to each race, but the promises to the Negroes, many of whom voted for Hampton, soon turned out to be mere words. With the exception of districts where the Negroes were in such a large majority as to make fraudulent returns for the administration too obvious, they were thereafter eliminated from the government. Only a few Negroes held office in the State during the next twenty years.

Desiring to obviate the necessity for the fraud and intimidation practiced in carrying every election thereafter, the native whites worked toward the end of eliminating the Negro from politics by legal circumnavigation within the

law. This effort was facilitated by the coming of the poor whites to power a generation later. This class had all of the hostility of the planters against the Negro in politics and had none of the sympathy of the former masters for the ex-slaves. Under the influence of men like Benjamin R. Tillman, the leader of the poor whites, a convention was called in 1895 to frame a new constitution which by indirect means prevented the majority of Negroes from voting and all Negroes from holding office.

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